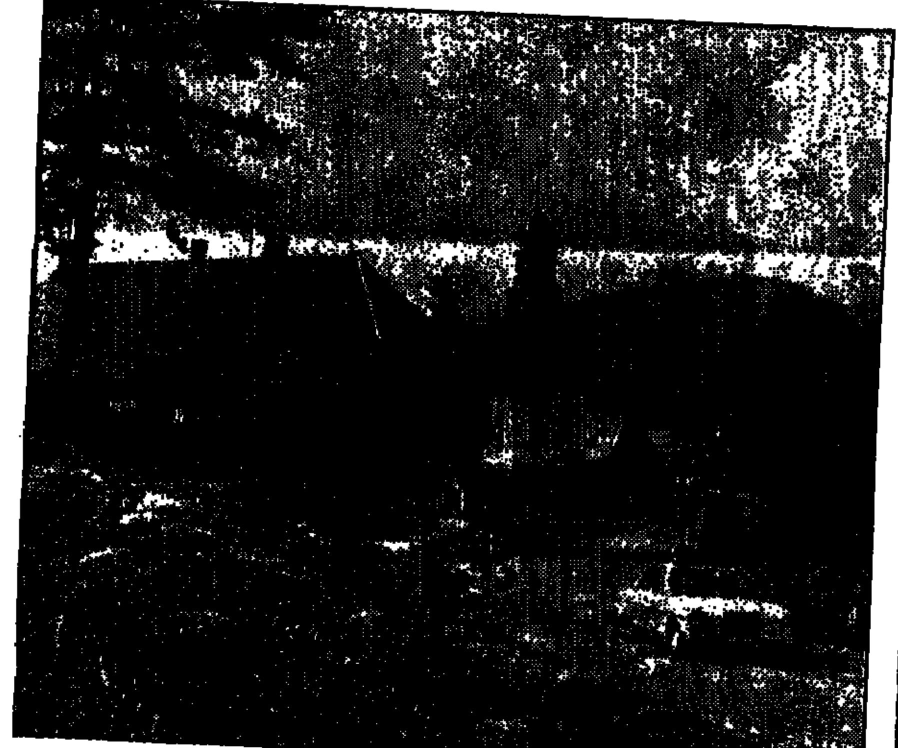
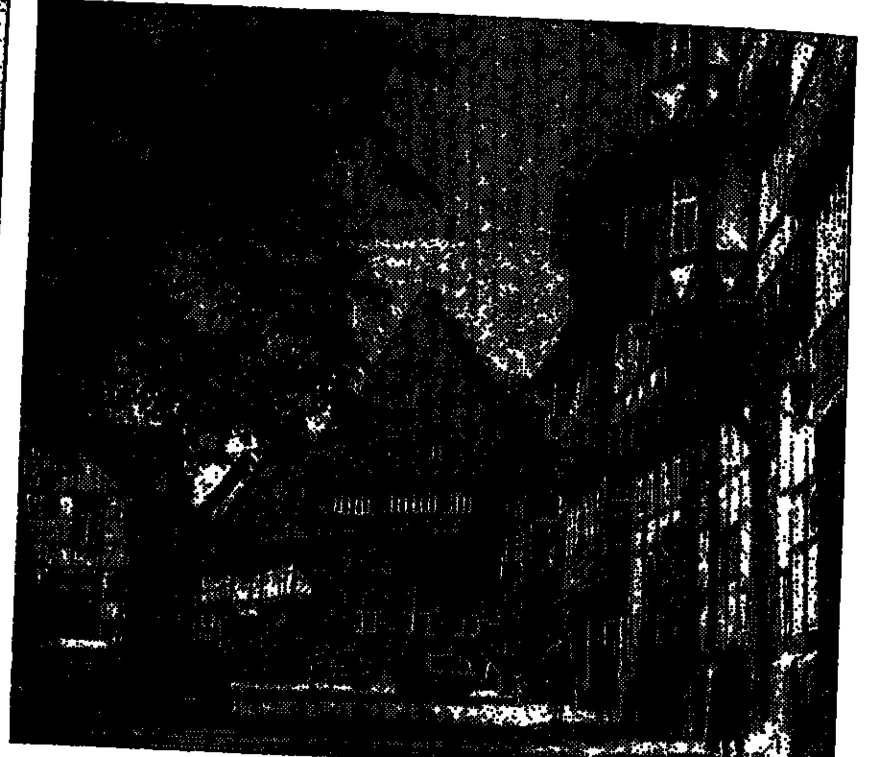
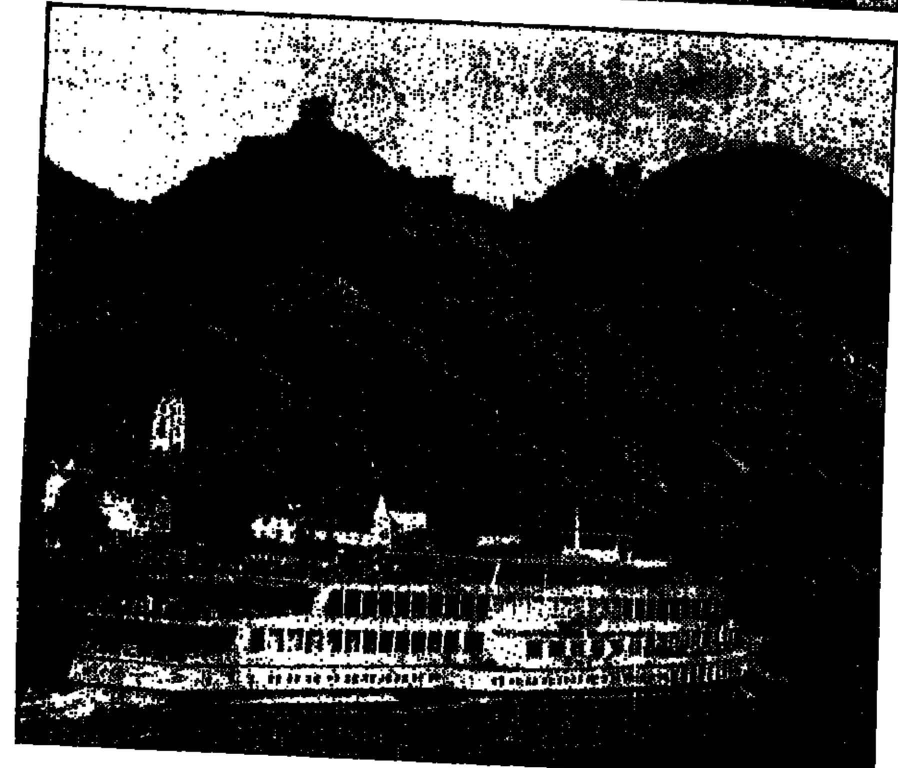








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Prague treaty still leaves Berlin question unresolved

Lübecker Nachrichten

The signing of the Bonn-Prague treaty by Chancellor Brandt and Foreign Minister Scheel at Prague's Czerny Palace was, after the treaties with Moscow, Warsaw and East Berlin, the last major agreement outstanding between Bonn and the Eastern Bloc.

Yet despite the lengths to which the Czech government went to play down the three-month delay (the signing ceremony was originally to have been held in Prague on 6 September) this crowning achievement of Bonn's Ostpolitik, as it might well have been rated, failed to give rise to the appropriate enthusiasm in this country.

The 11 December signing ceremony in Prague was still overshadowed by the dispute over consular representation of West Berlin by the Federal Republic, a problem that still remains to be settled in future negotiations.

The importance of a treaty establishing formal diplomatic ties between Bonn and Prague has been pushed into the background by the Berlin squables. The treaty is in fact of the greatest significance in putting an end to problems of the past.

It ends, for instance, decades of dispute in connection with the juncture at which the 1938 Munich Agreement (signed by Hitler, Mussolini, Daladier and Chamberlain) was null and void, this agreement, it will be recalled, having within living memory ceded Sudeten German areas of Czechoslovakia to the German Reich.

Agreement between Bonn and Prague on this issue was not reached until after extremely difficult and protracted negotiations, Prague having insisted on the Munich Agreement being declared null and void from the moment the signatories put pen to paper. This Bonn was unable to do, largely – from its point of view – because of the legal disadvantages that would ensue for the Sudeten Germans.

The treaty signed on 11 December merely declares Munich to be null and void. It is not specific as to the juncture at which this occurred but is definite as to the current and future position regarding the 1938 agreement.

This is balm for a historic wound from Czechoslovakia's point of view. The legal repercussions are dealt with in detail. No Sudeten German who was at any time a Czech citizen will now be liable to criminal proceedings, for instance, unless of course he is brought to book for bona fide war crimes.

The treaty has been signed and with the Brandt administration's current clear majority in the Bundestag ratification will no longer present problem either. Full diplomatic ties with Prague will be established as a result.

At the same time the ice has begun to thaw in ties with Hungary and Bulgaria, both of whom had shelved plans to exchange amabssadors with Bonn until such time as Bonn and Prague came to terms.

Günther van Well, head of the political department of the Bonn Foreign Office, is to visit Budapest and Sofia to enter into negotiations. Once Bonn has full diplomatic ties with these two the only blank on Bonn's diplomatic map of Eastern Europe will be Albania.

This is not, of course, that too much ought to be expected of the normalisation of relations with Czechoslovakia. Wolfgang Mischnick, parliamentary party leader of the coalition Free Democrats, has sounded a timely warning that the process of normalisation will be accompanied by difficulties, misunderstandings and doubts.

It is already clear that Czechoslovakia, encouraged by Bonn promises to Poland and Yugoslavia, is going to press for low-interest loans amounting to thousands of millions of Marks, credit facilities of this kind being the only practicable form of reparations payment these days.

A further touchy aspect of relations with Czechoslovakia and the other Eastern Bloc countries is Berlin. Willy Brandt and Walter Scheel signed the Prague treaty despite the fact that their August proviso has not been met and there has been no prior agreement that Bonn will be entitled to exercise consular representation of both individual West Berliners and West Berlin institutions and legal entities.

Czechoslovakia has merely agreed to talk with Bonn on the subject, basing negotiations on the framework provided by the Moscow agreement between Foreign Ministers Scheel and Gromyko.

According to the agreement reached in Moscow one prospect is that of direct links between courts of law in the Federal Republic and West Berlin on the one hand and the Eastern Bloc country on the other.

Prague mooted this solution in August but it was refused by Bonn as inadequate. The only improvement in the position at that juncture is that Prague is now willing to discuss the matter of West Berlin court procedures with Bonn. In August the Czechs were only prepared to discuss this side of the matter with the Berlin Senate.

Even so, experience shows that the GDR will leave no stone unturned in Prague or elsewhere when an opportunity of keeping the Berlin pot boiling arises. Despite the signing of the Prague treaty Berlin remains the test of the Eastern Bloc's willingness to relax tension.

Werner Neumann

(Lübecker Nachrichten, 12 December 1973)



Chancellor Willy Brandt, Gustav Husak, General Secretary of the Czech Communist Party (centre) and Federal Foreign Minister Walter Scheel in Prague on 11 December (Photo: dpa)

Good-neighbourliness appeal by Brandt on Prague TV

A story that began in Prague has now come to its conclusion. On 15 March 1939 Adolf Hitler signed the decree establishing the "Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia". This may be considered the onset of an imperialist adventure that ended some years later with the division of the German Reich and the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans from Czechoslovakia.

At Czerny Palace, hardly a stone's throw away from the Hradcin Castle where Hitler put pen to paper, Willy Brandt has – nearly 35 years later – signed the treaty establishing normal relations between Czechoslovakia and the Federal Republic.

At long last peace has officially returned to ties between Germans and Czechs and in this region like others Bonn has acknowledged the results of the Second World War.

It was a sad day for the Sudeten German expellees, many of whom feel it to be inexcusable that the preamble to the treaty should mention the crimes of violence committed by the Nazis yet not make a single reference to the crimes committed against three million Sudeten Germans.

Yet the *Ostpolitik* pursued by Chancellor Willy Brandt and Foreign Minister Walter Scheel represents no more than an admission of what other governments have avoided saying in so many words for years: the admission that Germany lost its Second World War and has had to pay the price.

It was a sad day too for Czech emigres in this country and the oppressed opposition in Czechoslovakia. Willy Brandt paid his respects to rulers by the grace of Moscow in an occupied country.

Five years ago, before the Warsaw Pact invasion, Czechoslovakia enjoyed the reputation of being in many ways the freest country in the world. Nowadays the number of people who have lost their jobs for political reasons runs into several hundred thousand and several hundred political offenders are serving prison sentences.

In coming to terms with Prague Bonn had to acknowledge not only the status quo of 1945 but also that of 1968.

The declared aim of the treaty is to consolidate peace and security in Europe, but neither of these is decided in Bonn or Prague. Gustav Husak merely carries out orders from Mr Brezhnev and Willy Brandt was only able to bring his Ostpolitik to a successful conclusion because it corresponds to the detente policies pursued by the West.

As for the peace and security of Czechoslovakia, they are certainly not threatened by the spokesmen for Sudeten Germans in this country, let alone by the Bundeswehr.

Relations between what are, after all, neighbouting countries returned to normal some years ago. Hundreds of thousands of Sudeten Germans have been able to visit their old homes unhindered. Artists, writers and scientists maintained close contacts until the Soviet invasion of 1968. This country was and remains Czechoslovakia's main trading partner in the West,

To this extent the treaty between Bonn and Prague is behind the times, but the delay is due to the inflexibility of Czech domestic policies in the post-Stalin and post-Dubcek eras.

Prior to the "Prague Spring" of 1968 (and since the August 1968 Warsaw Pact invasion too, for that matter) the Prague politbureau has taken refuge behind the legal quibbles over when the Munich

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■ FOREIGN AFFAIRS

France adopts a more European outlook

Frankfurter Allgemeine

France has changed its tune on European affairs, Foreign Minister Michel Jobert's speech to the National Assembly confirmed the lesson learnt in the Middle East conflict that France on its own is not in a position to exert influence on international political developments.

The change in outlook regarding policy towards Europe took shape last summer when France abandoned its resistance to consultations concerning the declaration of Atlantic principles proposed by Dr Kissinger.

France is meanwhile intensively engaged in talks on this topic, though admittedly the French are sounding a warning note against specifying "partnership," "interdependence," "consultation" and "cooperation" between Europe and America, experience allegedly showing that America does not stand by such commitments when a crisis occurs.

In the wake of the Middle East crisis M. Pompidou then proposed regular summit meetings of the Nine. This was followed by M. Jobert's informative November speech to the National Assembly and a second to the Western European Union in which he called on Europeans to assume responsibility for their own security.

His two predecessors Maurice Schumann and Maurice Couve de Murville spoke in similar terms, while M. Chaban-Delmas called for a "European executive." This is all new. What accounts for the change?

In the search for motives two longstanding worries of French foreign policy recur, the first of which concerns the balance of power in Europe.

This first worry is illustrated by increasingly frank warnings against any reduction in the US military presence in Europe, be it either unilateral or negotiated in conjunction with the Russians. Suspicious queries as to neutralist tendencies in this country are another side of the same coin.

The second motive is the old Gaullist worry lest Europe become the plaything of the Great Powers, Yalta in a new guise. This worry is increasingly being shared by other European governments.

The others are no longer needed by the United States to the same extent as in the past when peace depended on the balance of power between two pacts, whereas it is now to be based on a system of reciprocal declarations of intent by the two superpowers.

Europe, on the other hand, feels no less in need of American protection and dependent on the US military presence on this side of the Atlantic, and this need has gained in contour ever since the American presence has no longer been rated a reliable certainty.

Had this presence not existed France would never have been able to allow itself its foreign policy extravaganzas of recent years. The cooler and more level-headed the view taken by the United States of its commitments in Europe, the more Gaullist the foreign policy line adopted by Dr Kissinger has become, the more uncertain the basic premises of France's Gaullist foreign policy have become and the more concerned Paris has become to seek cooperation with its neighbours.

Paris is, of course, beginning to admit as much, but the contents of the old policies live on, as is evidenced by the contradictions and confusions that are rife in current French declarations.

The Americans are to remain stationed in Europe, retaining their current conventional and nuclear strength, but Paris has no intention of returning to the Nato fold or cooperating with the Nato Eurogroup.

France talks in terms of a European Union yet does its utmost to forestall any imitation of the Brussels integration pattern. There is talk of common defence but not of a defence community. The body that is to be activated is the Western European Union, although two of the Nine, Denmark and Eire, are not members.

The Common Market summits suggested by M. Pompidou are compared in Paris with a European Cabinet. There are also calls for a European executive. Yet neither means what it might at face value be taken to mean: a European government.

Summit meetings of European heads of government have been proposed by President Pompidou to procedurally contain and defuse the latest illogicalities of French policy towards Europe.

They will link politically the Foreign Ministers convened on the one hand as the Common Market Council of Ministers and on the other to foster political cooperation.

The heads of government are not to pass joint resolutions, however. They are merely to hold consultations and work out details of European policy individually and at home.

The Common Market summits are not conceived of as the superstructure of European cooperation but as its motive force. The principle and methods of purely national determination are retained, albeit in cooperative form.

M. Pompidou has not committed himself to any specific institutional arrangement, still less to European progress with built-in safeguards against setbacks.

The back door remains ajar, but at the same time there can be no denying that the front door too has been opened, letting in a current of fresh air. The ambivalence of France's new European policy remains unsatisfactory yet it also admits of pof progress.

France has consented to a process out of which its partners may be able to forge fresh links towards integration. Paris evidently does not yet know what it has in mind. It has merely come to realise that the time has come to forge ahead.

Günther Gillessen

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 10 December 1973)

Nato reaffirms cohesion of Western alliance

Sessions of the North Atlantic Council do not as a rule result in abrupt changes in Nato political strategy. Twice a year these encounters represent an attempt to review Western security policy, the guidelines of which may but must not as a result influence the action taken by Nato and Nato countries.

There was nevertheless something special about the recent Brussels meeting of the Nato Council. Last spring Dr Kissinger, now US Secretary of State, volleyed the ball into Nato's court with his call for a new Atlantic Charter. Then, this autumn, the Middle East war plunged both America and its European allies into a reciprocal crisis.

Viewed against the background of great expectations – Dr Kissinger's Year of Europe – on the one hand and renewed strain on the other, the two horns of a dilemma, one might say, the outcome of the Brussels talks seems surprisingly normal.

The fresh declaration of Nato principles may remain a distant prospect (the communiqué talks in terms of its appearance next spring in time for the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of Nato), but on the other hand Nato does not appear to be on the verge of breakdown, as a number of observers had forecast.

When all is said an done, crises and trials of strength for the alliance have been frankly debated in the past, at times being taken as an opportunity to review Nato targets.

With the new Charter in mind the fundamental targets of the North Atlantic pact remain, according to the Brussels communiqué the maintenance of peace, the improvement of relations between the blocs and, in third place only, the search for better guarantees of security and prosperity.

Viewed in the light of Dr Kissinger's April appeal for new targets, inspiration and creative design, the Brussels guidelines are sober and circumspect.

Under the impression made by the arms policies pursued by the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet-inspired Arab blitz campaign in the Middle East the enthusiasm about detente and disarmament seems to have cooled down somewhat.

Comparison with the Nato conferences of last summer and a year ago demonstrates the extent to which the alliance has lowered its sights. Nato may never have stuck its neck out on detente strategy – detente has always been accompanied by the protection afforded by the deterrent – but to judge by Brussels even the risk of limited detente is to be reduced, or so it would seem.

If the wording of the communiqué is not clear enough on this point one may go no further than quote Nato Secretary-General Joseph Luns of Holland who has compared Moscow's current arms policy with that of Berlin in the thirties.

Bearing in mind that Hitler systematically enlarged the Wehrmacht with the intention of pursuing his subsequent annexation policies one can but wonder what hopes Nato still places in the Vienna MBFR talks.

Yet even if Dr Luns had not been so forthright the language spoken by the Western alliance would have been chill[illegible] towards its Eastern counterpart.

The communiqué no longer mentions progress in East-West relations as it did a year ago or last June. There was merely diplomatic praise of the "further development" of East-West ties "in a wide range of areas" and hopes were expressed of a "balanced and f[illegible] outcome" to the Vienna troop-cut talks.

The Nato Ministers did, however, t[illegible] in terms of progress in maintaining the internal cohesion of the Western alliance. Solidarity, they noted, was essential to guarantee deterrence and detente. Increasing external pressure may not be conducive to detente but it could well help to consolidate Nato and further integration and the solution of problems within the alliance, some of the problems at least.

In the context of relations between Europe and the United States the communiqué makes no specific mention by way of commentary or praise of the Nixon-Brezhnev nuclear accords of last June which gave rise to such bad blood at the time.

The agreements, which threaten to undermine the US nuclear shield for Western Europe, are merely noted, which would seem to indicate that the two [illegible] continue to disagree on this issue.

As regards the crucial issue of the continued stationing of US troops in Europe the Nato Council evidently reached agreement on the formula that was to be expected.

US troop strength will not be unilaterally cut as long as the Europeans make their contribution towards the "solution of the resulting financial problems for the United States."

There may not be much new on the Nato front, then, but by agreeing to a deadline for the Atlantic declaration and a solution to economic and military differences the Ministers have brought an uncharacteristic deadline pressure to bear on the North Atlantic pact.

Christian Potyka

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, 12 December 197[illegible])

Brandt on Prague TV

Continued from page 1

Agreement of 1938 was considered to have been null and void.

The Munich Agreement was thus harnessed to an ideological defensive, and when Prague finally agreed to a compromise acceptable for this country it was Bonn that suddenly started an argument over the interpretation of the Berlin Agreement, delaying reconciliation by a few months more.

The distressing course of events prior to the signing ceremony at Czerny Palace is offset by the benefits to be gained from normal diplomatic relations. The treaty renders tension more tolerable. It will pave the way for improvements in respect of trade and tourist obstacles that remain, presenting many Czech citizens of German extraction with the prospect of an exit visa for this country.

But above all it will help both people to bear the burden of the past more easily. The black spots of the past, Versailles, St Germain, Munich and Lidice, are receding into the distance.

In an address televised in Prague Willy Brandt warned younger generations that they too would not be excused historic responsibility. The historical ties that have linked and parted Germans and Czechs date back to earlier periods than 1945, 1939 or even 1919. Both countries have gone through the euphoric and the darker periods of nationalism. Now is their chance to live in belated good neighbourliness.

Karl-Heinz Janssen

(Die Zeit, 14 December 197[illegible])

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■ POLITICS

Bonn lacks imagination in handling domestic problems

Domestic policies are in the limelight at the moment. The government and parliamentary parties have been holding consecutive sessions on land laws, worker participation in management, accumulation of capital wealth in private hands and the abortion laws.

There are hopes that at long last after a year of the second term of the Social Democrat-Free Democrat legislative period Willy Brandt and Walter Scheel are at last getting to the crux of their responsibilities.

It is the manner in which these subjects are being discussed that proved to us that this government is still not acting decisively and taking stock of the mandate the electorate gave it.

According to the constitution of this country it is not simply and solely a problem of the government leader to deal with domestic affairs, but it is first and foremost his responsibility.

It is essential when considering problems of this kind that government leaders should not be tempted to act according to the mood of the moment.

It is not a recent discovery in this country that Willy Brandt is far more of an international statesman than a politician who can concentrate mainly on domestic affairs. In the first legislative period of the Social Democrat-Free Democrat coalition the excitement of foreign and German policy pushed such thoughts into the background.

Now the energy crisis has appeared to point out the leadership weakness. The country's leaders have not had anyone to help them out with productive suggestions or even clear information to meet the challenge.

As far as worker participation in management is concerned the government is obviously prepared to present to the Bundestag two alternative Bills, or rather two in one, so as to make good the Chancellor's promise that he will have produced a compromise by Christmas.

The two possibilities that have been put forward so far do not contain anything that could not have been drummed up at the beginning of the year.

If the talks in the Coalition on the possible reforms of land laws do not make substantial progress in the future Housing Minister Hans Jochen Vogel will present a Bill to the Cabinet containing his suggestions and those of his Social Democrat colleagues.

As far as the controversial §218 is concerned dealing with this country's abortion laws, the government decided at the beginning of this legislative period that it would not put forward its own proposals for reform.

Thus the government has a tendency to pass the buck with regard to finding a compromise in the central matters of its programme, rather than undergoing the long and wearisome search itself.

This may be quite reasonable where §218 is concerned, since this is a matter for individual consciences.

But the procedure in this case as well is a clear expression of the fact that the government is bit by bit giving up the opportunities of taking the initiative itself. It is prepared to shelve the burden of forcing Bills through the Bundestag. It is suffering from a lack of inspiration and determination in domestic affairs, where its handling of foreign affairs have been so self-assured.

The Free Democrats are insisting on a link between legislation providing for the accumulation of capital in the bank accounts of working people with a reform of corporation tax laws. They are also linking the capital wealth matter with legislation for worker participation in company affairs.

So the matters in hand are no longer reforms that can be dealt with by isolated commissions of experts. They are an intricate network of decisions to be taken by the political leadership. It is the duty of the leadership to set the priorities for each of these individual projects, to identify with them and to put all their political power into ensuring that they pass through all the stages necessary in the Bundestag and Bundesrat and become law.

We are already getting some clear indication of where the disorientated fiddling and fumbling of government commissions can lead. Essential matters connected with land law reform are tied in with preparatory decisions about the tax on growth in value of land which will not come on the government agenda until the next legislative period which begins after the general election in 1976.

Legislation for the participation of workers in company management which the Coalition has promised will be dealt with in this legislative period has been tied in with the proposed legislation enabling private persons to accumulate capital wealth which the government simply promised would be drafted out sometime between now and 1976.

Of course the government must think and plan beyond the next elections. But if it allows itself to be hog-tied on reforms that are urgent and should be carried though in this legislative period, by their being tied in to no particular purpose with reforms to be carried out at some vague later date, no one in Bonn need be surprised if all the planning to date is rendered useless by a change of government.

Inspired initiatives and determination to see reform proposals become law are among the ideal and typical roles of a government in a parliamentary system.

It is said of Willy Brandt that he knows how to fight with his back to the wall. No progress is made in domestic policy by the Chancellor's resorting to great political oratory because there is no more practical alternative.

It is of no value that in these circumstances he becomes a figurehead and a simple figure of integration so that faced with a choice of Good and Evil Good prevails.

The rank of a government leader is determined to a large extent by whether he is the kind of man who always reserves his right to make the final decision or whether he is the kind who shuns important decisions and passes the buck.

If a government and its leader is suffering from the inability to lead the country it must be prepared to take criticism

This criticism will be levelled at the government and more particularly at the chairman of the largest government party

When the government is failing to show the way to the country it must be prepared to face the provocation of an Opposition party telling how it should be doing its job.

Willy Brandt entered his second term of office with a slogan that hinted at a well-balanced concept of domestic reform: quality of life.

It is high time that the Chancellor did something specific about the basic components of the quality of life, rather than simply identifying himself with the theory of it.

Statesman-like gestures and political rhetoric may at certain times be almost as good as deeds, but in the long-run they cannot replace the deeds thereby promised.

Robert Leicht

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, 5 December 1973)

Herbert Wehner has become the SPD man of action

Herbert Wehner has produced a rabbit out of the top hat. This unfathomable political talent has given an audience, the general public, that has been starved of fireworks on the political stage for some time now a show worth watching: the rise, fall and rise again of Herbert Wehner.

His political career seemed to be plummeting downhill. But without any damage he has turned the tide.

Before the last general election more and more Social Democrats were saying that Herbert Wehner should be put out to grass as soon as possible.

Wehner even joined in the chorus himself. In one Bundestag battle he was heard to say something along the lines of glancing back into the setting sun.

After the elections he resigned from the deputy party chairmanship. When he caused the rumpus in Moscow over Brandt and Scheel's Ostpolitik many people thought that Wehner had reached the end of the line.

But now the parliamentary party of the Social Democrats has re-elected him chairman with a large majority. What caused the turnabout?

The answer is that Wehner was able to give political form to growing discontent in his party about real or supposed lack of action by the leadership.

Movements that run counter to each other are brought into line, protests against the impasse that has been reached in social welfare and Ostpolitik on the one hand and disappointments on the other that the leadership is standing by and doing nothing while radicals from the Social Democrat Party are gradually taking over from below.

There is a general desire for movement and action in the Social Democrat Party. But Wehner is not interested in movement in any old direction, but a constant movement to the left.

He would love to see Willy Brandt in a decorative office such as President and no longer taking an active part in politics. With Helmut Schmidt as chancellor, he feels, there would be less possibility of resistance to more Socialism in the SPD. Schmidt would not make such a good job, in Wehner's opinion, of sticking his head in the clouds.

But he still has the Free Democrats to contend with.

The FDP can, if necessary, happily give up any claims to the office of Federal President. But it is not so willing to give up the positions it has gained in the government and has no intention whatsoever of renouncing the minimum demands it has set for social welfare reform.

The Free Democrats are keen to avoid a protracted dispute with the SPD, since this would once again leave them open to the accusation that they were not a fit party to join in a coalition.

For this reason the Free Democrats are also concerned that the SPD should get weaving. The FDP wants the government to get to grips with all the important points that could give rise to conflict as swiftly as possible.

But getting to grips with bones of contention, as far as the left wing sees it, would mean action now followed by further stagnation.

Now Wehner must make his decision. He must decide between the government coalition of Social Democrats and Free Democrats that wants the movement to the left to be kept within confined boundaries and left-wing activism that is getting more impatient day by day with the idées fixes of the Coalition.

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 5 December 1973)

State must encourage but not dominate

It may pander to popular appeal to be popular for a large section of grass-roots and to call for State intervention, government controls, price [illegible], a clampdown on major organisations and the issuing of petrol coupons so as to share out bureaucratically as justly as possible the short supplies of oil and petrol on hand.

But what are the facts?

The oil crisis is not a situation in which theoreticians should be given free rein.

Nor should it be a time when those who consider "the system" to be the root of all evil run riot.

Those who are calling for greater intervention by the State and demanding all kinds of measures should ask themselves whether they do not really mean that this country's free-market economic system should be made the whipping-boy.

There is no denying that such a tendency is abroad in this country at the moment. And it is particularly rife in the Social Democrat Party.

But at the "minor party conference" of the Social Democrats in Bonn on 7 December worn-out demands for the overthrow of the system did not meet with popular appeal. Willy Brandt himself gave the sign. Less rather than more oil would flow if the State took over crisis management.

This does not exclude the possibility that government bodies will occasionally step in to control individual factors. The free play of market forces will certainly not be allowed to become a game of chance.

But there is no denying that here and there it has in fact become a toss of the dice, though this is not generally symptomatic of the West German economy.

Economies based on the free-enterprise system have often enough flexed their muscles in most difficult times and demonstrated their adaptability. The colossal apparatus of government has proved to be much more ponderous.

What is needed at the moment is first and foremost productivity and competitiveness, ideas and technology, cooperation with States in the Third World and a foreign policy that guarantees supplies of raw materials to our economy over a long period.

The main function of the State in these circumstances is to give a helping hand where necessary, but mainly to stand on the touch-line and cheer the country on.

It goes without saying that the government must also take on the job of breaking the ice where foreign policy is concerned.

All are affected equally by the general challenge that has been issued by the oil-producing countries to the industrial nations of the western world. Industry is affected to the same degree as the State.

It is essential to pull together rather than the State's indulging in surreptitious and politically motivated conflict-making.

Jens Feddersen

(Neue Ruhr Zeitung, 8 December 1973)

■ LABOUR RELATIONS

Schleyer to head Employers Association Confederation

Frankfurter Allgemeine

Martin Schleyer, a member of the Daimler-Benz board, replaced Otto A. Friedrich as head of the Confederation of Employers Associations in the first week of December.

There is nothing spectacular about the change as Friedrich, 71, had already announced his retirement. He is too clever to think himself indispensable or to cling to the post for reasons of prestige.

Schleyer was long earmarked as his successor. He had already been picked for the post. The changeover was smooth. There were no rival candidates, no vote and no internal dissension.

One striking feature is that the employer associations, the third pillar of free enterprise alongside the industrial associations and the chambers of industry and commerce, have never had any trouble selecting a president.

Since the end of the Second World War they have always had men of political stature like Walter Raymond, Paulssen, Balke, Friedrich and, now, Schleyer at their disposal. The public was able to view them as more than high-class lobbyists.

That is important for the role played by employers associations. Together with the trade unions, they provide the economic aspects of wage and welfare policy within the collective bargaining system. They therefore fulfil a political role, the effects of which spread far beyond their own sphere of interest into the public sector.

As smooth as the changeover may have appeared on the surface, a stage in the development of the Confederation of Employers Associations has come to an end. As in many other sectors of political life during the early seventies, there have been a number of changes marking the end of a period that will go down in history as the post-war era.

As far as political and social developments are concerned, the time of reconstruction and hectic growth is a thing of the past. That also involves the end of the employers' past policy which aimed largely against progress being too hectic. Past policy was marked more by reserve than forward thinking.

During this era the Confederation of Employers Associations was more concerned with opposing demands than with energetically putting forward ideas of its own to help progress proceed along the right path.

An attitude of this type soon begins to appear reactionary. It also leads to more bureaucracy within the apparatus so that employers associations degenerate into superbly administered institutions whose political effectivity is constantly decreasing.

Manufacturers are today more than ever the target of political attacks. In view of the belligerency displayed towards their existence, and consequently that of free enterprise, they must not be content with warding off attacks but must take the initiative if they are to assert themselves.

But manufacturers will not survive the clash unless they have associations that can also function politically. They need organisations that are no longer purely specialist consultative bodies but coordination centres for political arguments and ideas. It was only to be foreseen that developments in this country would one day demand politically-committed manufacturers. The employers associations will have to adjust.

The willingness to do so is evident in many quarters. More and more manufacturers have become aware of the political aspect of their profession in view of the threats and insults to which they are exposed. They want to have a firm basis from which to fight back and are evidently more and more prepared to indulge in public relations.

A good deal of initiative is being taken at a grass-roots' level – from the lower echelon of the employers associations. A memorandum recently published by the Confederation of Employers Associations indicates growing support among the higher echelons for political activity in those sectors in which they operate. That is a sign that the employers associations are already re-thinking their role in society.

The change of president possesses almost symbolic significance. Like many before him, Friedrich assumed office in 1969 claiming that he would not only pay lip service to progressive ideas but also help them set their stamp on the employers associations.

His stubborn attempts fell short of their goal. Perhaps he had made too many allowances as a result of his genteel and reserved nature. Perhaps he paid too much attention to his backward-looking colleagues in the executive and in the large number of Federal State branches and specialist associations.

Whatever the case, the aim of greater political charisma did not materialise, though this was not so much Friedrich's fault as that of conditions within the organisation as a whole.



Martin Schleyer (right) and Otto A. Friedrich

(Photo: ...)

His successor must now try to achieve what could not be implemented during his own term of office. The atmosphere is more propitious at present as more and more manufacturers recognise the need for reform within their organisations.

Schleyer possesses the type of Swabian sturdiness which always expresses itself in amiability. He has had the experience of tough wage negotiations as a representative of both manufacturers and employers associations and is respected by the trade unions despite all the personal insults issuing from their propaganda machines during pay battles. He could prepare the employers associations for the political work of the future.

But this will depend on two factors. The leaders of each association, right down to the smallest specialist organisation, will have to be persuaded to override the objections and interests of the reactionaries in their own ranks.

Manufacturer Kurt Pentzlin attacks "the dictatorship of the backwoodsmen" in his latest book. The president of the Federal League of Employers Associations will have to tear down the obstacles raised by his own colleagues if the employers associations are to gain political importance.

Secondly, during the new era employers associations there must be deliberations not only on how to eliminate the anarchistic diffusion of associations at grass-roots' level but also on how to achieve more common ground in the higher echelons of the organisation.

This era of growing belligerence towards manufacturers is also marked by a growth of trade union power. If the balance vital to our pluralistic society is to be maintained, the employers associations must become more of a force helping to develop the community through progressive ideas. The era of old-style lobbyism is past and gone. Employers associations are no longer on the defensive.

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 5 December 1973)

Salaries and wages and what the economy can bear

Nobody can expect the trade unions to moderate their wage demands in view of the rise in the cost of living – 6.6 per cent in October alone. To maintain the standard of living they have achieved without having to work extra hours, workers would have to receive a nine-per-cent rise as a higher income involves a higher percentage of tax deductions – the workers do not therefore share in the rise of productivity, as minimal as this may be, or in the greater effectivity of their work.

Hardly anyone would dispute the justification for high wage demands but there is a decisive difference between ten per cent and the fifteen per cent claimed by the Civil Servants Association and the Public Workers Trade Union.

This is not changed by the reasons put forward in support of such a high wage claim. Though the civil servants were content with an average 7.2 per cent rise, they are receiving for the first time an extra month's salary a year which is costing the taxpayer as much as 3,300 million Marks. Making allowances for future price rises when submitting wage claims is not however compatible with the government's declared aim of stability.

There is a reason for the trade unions cutting their wage demand for workers in the iron and steel industry from fifteen to eleven per cent. It is important at present to pursue stability without deviation and cope with the consequences of this policy, including the considerable difficulties faced by some branches of industry such as building and textiles. It is also important to master the problems posed by the energy crisis.

This does not merely involve the provision of petrol and heating oil. Jobs in the automobile industry and the branches that supply it are threatened if many potential car-buyers delay the purchase of a new vehicle. This could result in an economic backlash of unforeseeable proportions.

But this is pure speculation and to that extent we can second Eugen Loderer, head of the Metalworkers Union, when he claims that he sees no reason for altering the trade union's negotiating policy as a result of the oil shortage.

Nobody knows today how much additional personnel costs industry will be able to bear in 1974 as no one can forecast whether oil supplies will be cut or how this would effect economic growth.

We must reckon with the fact that government stabilisation policy and the oil shortage will together reduce economic growth in 1974 – perhaps completely. If production does not rise, distribution cannot either. Experience has demonstrated that it is impossible to satisfy greater demand by means of increased imports as specific articles are required and not just goods in general.

The mutually hostile positions manufacturers and workers are taking up today would not have been so extreme if capital wealth accumulation policy had been conducted with greater consistency in normal times and if workers had been made partners of management or shareholders of the firms where they work.

One thing is almost certain – if there is to be even minimal economic growth fifteen per cent wage rises are impossible. If there is no economic growth, wage demands over and above the rise in the cost of living would force prices up.

The success or failure of government stabilisation policy will depend on how firmly or irresolutely the State deals with the fifteen-per-cent wage claim submitted by the public service workers.

If the State sets a bad example, it will be hard for industry to turn down the high wage increases demanded by trade unions. It would then be even more difficult to recognise that all of us, both workers and employers, must develop a little more community spirit and abandon some of our selfcentredness.

Heinrich Thöns

(Hamburger Abendblatt, 4 December 1973)

■ ARMED FORCES

Organisational reforms for the Bundeswehr announced

The armed forces would lose much of their effectiveness and striking power during the course of the next few years if the present Bundeswehr organisation were to be retained.

The problem is particularly urgent as the defence budget will not increase as swiftly as the budget as a whole in future. The government has therefore spent a number of years planning a reform of armed forces organisation. Defence Minister Georg Leber's recent government statement can be considered a milestone.

Deliberations centre around Nato. The alliance was continually consulted when the new plans were being drawn up. Another important basis for reorganisation is the new concept of military strategy catering for the operational requirements of the armed forces in 1980. The decision to cut the conscription period from eighteen to fifteen months was taken some time ago. The idea of setting up a professional army or militia was turned down.

Attention had to be paid to the armed forces' role so that their military preparedness should not be diminished. This is now to be achieved by means of a cadre system, though the proposals put forward by the specially appointed Military Organisation Commission have been modified.

Brigades are to be maintained. Companies and batallions on the other hand will be based on the cadre system. Thirty thousand soldiers will be affected by this measure. Apart from them there will be 465,000 soldiers on constant alert.

These thirty thousand soldiers play a special role in the overall concept of the armed forces. They can be brought into operation almost immediately. Demobilised conscripts and soldiers who have signed on for a fixed period are obliged to join the armed forces' reserves for twelve months, four times as long as at present. What is more, every soldier knows his place in the company or battalion.

By continual practise at mobilisation of these thirty thousand the Defence Ministry hopes that the Bundeswehr's maximum military presence will be attained without delay. Incidentally, only by means of this measure has it proved possible to increase the number of brigades from 33 to 36.

Another aspect to be considered is effectivity. One of the ways of achieving this is by reducing the size of units. If companies or battalions lose between twenty and thirty per cent of their troops in the process or if the strength of an armoured company is reduced from seventeen to nine tanks, the changes will have been astonishing indeed.

They will naturally prompt further changes. The number of companies and battalions will grow. There will also be a rise in the number of brigades which will be reduced in size but will still fulfil Nato requirements.

The reorganisation has not merely been planned on the drawing board. Instead, a number of successful trials have been conducted. "The soldiers did not want to return to their old units," Defence Minister Georg Leber comments. Apart from improved contact between soldiers, mobility is far greater and the operational use of both men and equipment is increased.

Another factor of great importance is the winding up of various formations, units and commands in all branches of the armed forces, especially the medical service. Support units have not been spared either.

Georg Leber has described the merger of the field force and the territorial army as a tough nut. The winding up of the regional commands in particular has run into opposition. The Federal states plan to object and deputies too will intervene.

The reappraisal of the strategic position and the large number of tanks maintained by the Warsaw Pact has led to far-reaching changes. All army units and formations have been adjusted to the East's tank capacity. That is also true for the fusilier brigades which are being thoroughly reorganised.

A change in the higher echelons has also proved necessary. But this is in no way connected with the reorganisation of military leadership undertaken by former Defence Minister Helmut Schmidt in 1970. The restaffing now necessary is proceeding upwards from the lower echelons.

The reorganisation of the Bundeswehr, which will not be complete for another five years, has become necessary as a result of rising costs. Permanent expenditure, especially personnel costs, has rocketed, reducing the amount of the defence budget available for arms. The reorganisation should guarantee a balanced ratio of seventy to thirty. Time will tell whether this is really the case.

Georg Leber was sensible enough not to touch upon complaints about the unfairness of conscription. No solution to this problem is in sight. The bulge in coming years will lead to only 65 per cent of fit conscripts actually being called up. Leber has nothing against proposals issuing from other quarters but he has ruled out the idea of charging draft-dodgers a lump sum in lieu of service.

Georg Leber has committed himself strongly to the forthcoming reform. A good deal of it is due to his own initiative, ably guided by his experts of course. Leber's term in the Defence Ministry will probably be judged as to whether the new armed forces organisation fulfils the requirements of the seventies and eighties.

Helmut Berndt

(Der Tagesspiegel, 1 December 1973)

Pay increases

Frankfurter Allgemeine

The Armed Forces Association has demanded a pay rise for servicemen of at least twelve per cent. Servicemen with wives and children should benefit most as it is this category that have suffered worst from the rise in the cost of living.

To achieve this, the Association proposes raising salaries across the board and adding an allowance according to whether a soldier is married and, if so, how many children he has.

At its latest meeting the Association's Federal executive also turned to plans for armed forces reorganisation. It welcomed the proposed reform and stressed that it would not diminish the effectivity and fighting power of the armed forces as a convincing deterrent factor.

But reorganising the Bundeswehr would result in problems for the individual, it felt.

The Association directed particular attention to the Defence Ministry's plans for training non-commissioned officers. It welcomed the new overall concept as it provided a range of training of relatively equal value alongside the university study offered to officers.

It was however vital to ensure that the proposed steps were effectively coordinated in the three branches of the armed forces, it claimed. It therefore suggests the establishment of a special committee in the Defence Ministry to supervise education.

The Association feels that it is vital to stress the importance of the group leader in the new training concept for non-commissioned officers. Group leaders should be able to rise to the rank of sergeant in view of their responsibility for the soldiers and equipment entrusted to them in their post.

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 5 December 1973)

The problem of paying for US forces stationed in Europe

Concerted action between the Pentagon, State Department and Congress is currently paving the way for a new approach to America's European Nato partners for more money. Washington is no longer satisfied merely with the currency agreements signed with the Federal Republic every two years to offset the cost of the two hundred thousand or so American troops in Germany.

Washington plans to display more determination in upholding the view that the Europeans should also make good the loss of foreign currency America incurs through the cost of maintaining somewhat more than one hundred thousand troops in the rest of Europe.

But the Europeans are also being called upon to replace the losses incurred by the Americans as a result of the higher cost of maintaining their troops in Europe instead of in the United States.

This sum, claimed to be as high as 440 million dollars, is only part of the total two and a half milliard dollars balance of payments deficit incurred by the United States as a result of its Nato contribution in Europe.

The Senate demands full compensation from Western Europeans on threat of a complete withdrawal of American troops. It cannot yet be said for sure whether this standpoint is shared by the administration. One thing is however certain – the Nixon administration and Congress are no longer at such odds over this issue as they were in the past.

President Nixon has signed the Jackson-Nunn Bill threatening Europeans with a percentage reduction of US troops equal to the proportion of the American balance of payments deficit they refuse to make up.

The original purpose of the Jackson-Nunn Bill was to block Senator Mike Mansfield's more drastic demands. That succeeded. But by accepting the conditions of the Bill as its legally-bound mandate, the administration has undertaken the obligation to raise the issue in negotiations with its partners.

There is no question for the time being of the Americans receiving full compensation for the balance of payments deficit they incur. During the last few months Nato has been debating the possibility of offsetting these costs on a multilateral level. Nothing has so far come of this however as no European member apart from the Federal Republic is prepared to accept the American arguments.

Most of American's European partners claim that the US troops are defending America's own interests as well as Western Europe and that Washington itself should meet the costs.

But they concede the possibility of discussing whether America should not be granted compensation for the increased expenditure involved in maintaining troops in Western Europe instead of in the United States.

The 440 million dollars claimed by Washington appears rather too high however. But the Americans expect that the Federal Republic will contribute 330 million dollars during the current American financial year and that the other Nato countries will make up the remaining 110 million.

Bonn is not very enthusiastic about having to pay a considerable proportion of the multilateral contribution over and above the amount it pays under the bilateral agreement.

So far the Federal Republic has compensated America for eighty per cent of the foreign currency losses incurred as a result of stationing troops in Germany. The total for the two-year period up to 30 June 1973 was as high as 6.65 milliard Marks.

The United States is said to be demanding some eight milliard Marks on the basis of existing currency conditions.

Full compensation of the balance of payments deficit America incurs through stationing troops in Europe is not to be expected. On closer examination the battlecries being raised in Washington at present are no more than the psychological preparation for a period of hard bargaining with the Europeans.

The veiled threat of troop withdrawal is no more than a scrap of paper as the Jackson-Nunn Law is not to be applied before the end of 1975 and even then the administration would have an additional six months' room for manoeuvre. By then the MBFR negotiations in Vienna should have produced some results and changed the current situation, at least as far as the American troops are concerned.

Jürgen Kramer

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 5 December 1973)

Arms thefts

The armed forces, Federal Border Guard, police and other security forces appear unable to give themselves the same protection they offer other people. Pilfering is on the increase! All sorts of arms and ammunition are being stolen, ranging from pistols to explosives.

Replying to a question in the Bundestag, Interior Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher stated that thefts of this type have been recorded since July 1972. Past surmises have proved correct – arms are being stolen.

During the second half of 1972 and the first half on 1973 thieves stole 21 machine-guns, 60 sub-machine-guns, 147 quick-firing weapons, three anti-tank weapons, one bazooka and thirteen carbines. The Defence Minister is unable to say where these arms disappeared to.

But that is not all. As many as 434 pistols and revolvers, 74 Very pistols and sixteen shotguns also disappeared. Thieves also took suitable ammunition – a total of 285,341 bullets and shells for various types of weapon.

No statistics are available for the number of hand grenades stolen in the first half of 1973 – in 1972 the figure was 63. No mines disappeared though 64 metres of fuse and 366 detonators were stolen.

These items are described in the list of thefts as "arms of war". It would be interesting to learn where these arms of war have disappeared.

(Handelsblatt, 6 December 1973)

■ FINANCE

Bundesbank must not let sweeping devaluation go too far

Making economic policies for a living has become a hazardous profession. The sound of shotguns rang through the air on the cold day of early winter when Bonn Finance Minister Helmut Schmidt and his State Secretary Karl-Otto Pöhl met the French Economics and Finance Minister Valéry Giscard d'Estaing in the improvised conference room in the Château Puy d'Artigny on the Loire.

The West German delegation held their breath for a moment. Their French hosts smiled and reassured them, quipping: "Don't worry gentlemen, it's just the French police shooting journalists!"

Journalists had found their way to the conference of Finance Ministers of the United States, Britain, France, the Federal Republic and Japan, even though the meeting was meant to be secret. The five ministers had met to discuss international monetary matters.

Reliable reports emanating from among those taking part, however, reveal that the five ministers were at a loss what to do. They had no clue how they were to continue their monetary reform endeavours following the Arab oil boycott. The recovery of the dollar and its consequences for other industrial nations became the main item on the agenda

The exchange rate of the dollar has been rising since July like a phoenix from the ashes. This has left Europeans and the Japanese flabbergasted, while creating a new self-confidence among the Americans.

In July the dollar plunged to its lowest point – 2.2835 Marks. Then the floating dollar made a slight recovery and later something of a leap till it stood at 2.6440 Marks at the end of November.

On 6 July the revaluation of the Mark against the dollar was at its zenith, with an upvaluation of 40.1 per cent. On 30 November the Bundesbank reported that of this revaluation only 23.1 per cent remained. This means in simple terms that the Mark has been *devalued* against the dollar by seventeen per cent.

This word "devaluation" brings us up with a halt. Since 1961 the Mark has only ever been mentioned in connection with revaluations upwards. Now, towards the end of 1973 it has been devalued by market forces not only in comparison with the dollar, but also with other important currencies. In comparison with the sixteen currencies quoted at the Frankfurt money exchange the Mark has been down-valued by seven per cent since July this year.

What has happened? The two devaluations of the dollar – in December 1971 by 7.98 per cent and in February 1973 by ten per cent – have begun to take effect. America's exports have been rising, her imports have been cut back. At the same time there has been an about-turn in the flow of capital. Up till this summer money was moving from America to Europe. Just before the oil crisis there was a flight to the dollar.

These events had their effect on America's balance of payments. After the major deficits of 1971 and 1972 the Unites States returned to a surplus of exports in the first ten months of this year. In the third quarter of this year the basic balance showed a surplus for the first time since 1957.

The dollar has also been bolstered by the fact that the rate of inflation in Europe is higher than in America. In these circumstances the two devaluations of the dollar proved to be excessive. Foreign exchange markets have compensated for this anomaly by natural forces. The dollar has become reliable again. The United States will remove her foreign exchange controls in the near future.

One does not have to be a clairvoyant to see what Finance Secretary George P. Shultz asked of this colleagues at the secret session along the Loire. Washington cannot sit back and watch the benefits for American trade of the dollar devaluations whittled away by revaluations. The dollar cannot be allowed to rise much more on international markets. To prevent this Europe and Japan must be prepared to release part of their dollar holdings on to the market.

This time if the Bundesbank is to meet the wishes of the Americans it will have to get rid of dollars, rather than buying them up. But Bonn and the Bundesbank must not only think of the best interests of the Americans. They must also check whether selling dollars is in this country's interests. The question is how far Bonn and Frankfurt want to let the Mark be devalued.

State Secretary Pöhl stated recently that this country was only interested in a modest devaluation of the Mark. The aim of the Mark revaluations has been to control the creation of money and thus prevent inflation. The advantages of this that have been gained in the past few years should not just be thrown away now by a protracted and far-reaching devaluation.

As the world's greatest creditor the Federal Republic is concerned to whittle away the massive level of reserves it has built up. Economic expansion on the domestic front has stretched the level of employment in this country beyond tolerable limits. Quite apart rom the problems posed by the oil crisis this country finds it more favourable to move production centres overseas.

In our own interests a large devaluation of the Mark must be avoided. The Bundesbank must sell a limited number of dollars, as it has done to a certain extent in the past.

If the exchange rate of the dollar continues to rise it is likely to do so even more steeply than in the past. Mr Shultz and his experts are of the opinion that the Bundesbank should sell dollars when the rate in Frankfurt reaches 2.67 Marks. This is the lower intervention point of the dollar parity, as was fixed after the last devaluation of the dollar in February. At this rate Bonn's best interests are served as well, the government feels. Further devaluation, for instant as a support for exporters, is not regarded as necessary.

To prevent the danger of dollars selling leading to a stifling of the money with exotic interest rates it is essential that the Bundesbank cancel out the loss of liquidity by introducing some reliefs to their restrictive policy. The first small step in this direction was taken at the end of November. The Bank would thus solve a tricky reform problem. Dollars that are taken from the reserves would not be subject to debt conversion.

The renewed situation on the oil market increases this country's interest in having a Mark that is not undervalued. The latest rough estimates suggest that the oil-producing countries will have about thirty milliard dollars a year at their disposal not needed to pay for imports.

These massive sums are placed for a short term on the Eurodollar market. They are another flood that would burst the floodgates into the Federal Republic if there were any suspicion that the Mark was due for revaluation again. For this reason the Mark must not be allowed to sink too far.

(Die Zeit, 7 December 1973)

Another huge trade surplus

The balance of payments surplus of the Federal Republic in October was about 2,300 million Marks, compared with 1,500 million in September and 1,400 in October 1972.

According to figures issued by the Federal Statistics Office in Wiesbaden exports were 17,900 million Marks (up by 24 per cent compared with the previous October). Imports were up by eighteen per cent at fourteen milliard Marks. The surplus on trade was thus nearly four milliard Marks.

In the previous month of this year the trade surplus had been 3,800 million Marks, while in October last year there was a 2,600 million Mark profit on trade.

The losses made on service industries and capital transfer were 1,700 million Marks in October, a decline on the September figure of 2,300 million Marks. But the figure this October was considerably higher than in the corresponding month of last year, 1,300 million Marks.

(Die Welt, 6 December 1973)

Stock markets ail but Mark convalesces

Fears of recession have caused turmoil on the world's stock exchanges. Shareholders have been in a panic mood all over the world from New York to West Germany and Japan. There was already a mood of preparedness for an economic downturn on world stock exchanges before the oil crisis came along and changed it to fears of depression.

This psychosis has temporarily taken over from the calm calculations normally to be found at stock exchanges. Shares were dumped on the market willy-nilly with seemingly little regard to their real worth. Is the age of reason on stock exchanges over and done with?

Only at a later date shall we be able to judge whether what has been happening in the past few days is reasonable or not. It is essential to see what the longer-term effects of the Arab oil boycott will be. At the moment even experts on the economic situation are not able to say what the effects of the oil shortage on Western economies will be in the long term.

It is this uncertainty that prompted so many shareholders to sell. For the most part their philosophy has been to sell now at a loss rather than risk a heavier loss later on.

But it is not just a few private small shareholders who could be considered to have an inadequate understanding of the market who have been getting shot of their shares lately. Those who make their living from the buying and selling of shares have joined the panic sell and helped push quotations down, down, down.

Banks and investment funds in the United States have been receiving massive deposits. And in the Federal Republic too banks have been swapping their shareholdings in companies whose economic position is strong and promising, and which looked like solid growers only yesterday, for hard cash.

When crisis comes liquidity is all important. There are still many people alive and active on stock markets who remember the Great Depression when cash was king and shares and fixed-interest bonds threatened to become so much waste paper. It is fear of a repetition of those bad old days that is causing the panic selling.

The unrest is not confined to share markets. In the Federal Republic hysteria has also gripped the market in fixed-interest bonds. There have not been the same panic sales, but in the past few days we have seen an obvious lack of enthusiasm for investing money in long-term bonds. Obviously the closing gap between the potential profit from bonds and long-term bank deposits has helped fuel this fire.

Considering the Federal Republic has so far been spared a genuine energy crisis, and fortunately there is nothing more than the fear of a crisis in this country, which has been aggravated by the effects of scaremongering by some politicians on the man-in-the street, and considering that the slump on the stock market is probably exaggerated, there is no valid reason for a slump on the market in bonds.

The economic state at present makes a lowering of interest rates seem inevitable, and for some time now the Bundesbank has ceased issuing denials of this.

Then when the weaknesses of the Mark on international exchange markets is quoted as a symptom of economic crisis in the Federal Republic the world of reason has been turned completely on its head.

What is happening to the Mark at foreign exchanges should be taken as a part of the process of normalisation, though some of the characteristics of this development are exaggerated.

It should not be forgotten that up to the summer of this year the Mark underwent a far-reaching and protracted revaluation, and this was not based on rationality. It was brought about by a chronic balance of payments surplus, but far more important reasons for this revaluation were historical developments, the psychology of the finance market and the weakness of the dollar.

Years of experience on finance markets suggested that the only thing to do was raise the exchange rate of the Mark. So international financial capital which mistrusted the dollar flooded to this country.

Of course it is not yet possible to say that the dollar is over the hump. But the American balance of trade and payments has shown clear improvements, which have increased trust in the US currency.

At the same time there has been a turn in the tide of international capital which has flooded out of this country and back to the dollar. Thus the international monetary system has cooled down and normalised, and thereby it has lost its attraction for the speculator.

The Mark is on the way to becoming a normal currency after a long period in which it was the asylum of huge sum of speculative money, mainly "hot dollars". The Mark no longer has the burden of huge finance accounts, the springboard of international trade at a time of uncertainty. One indication of this process of normalisation is the recent weakness as regards Mark foreign loans.

(Die Welt, 1 December 1973)

■ ENERGY

After butter and sugar Europe amasses a uranium mountain

Uranium reserves in the Western World
As of 1 January 1973 in 1,000 tons

	South Africa	USA	Canada	Australia	Western Europe	Others
Price class less than $10 per lb. – Discovered	202	259	185	71	64	85
Price class less than $10 per lb. – Estimated	8	538	190	78	50	51
Price class $10 to $15 lb. – Discovered	62	141	122	29	300	26
Price class $10 to $15 lb. – Estimated	26	231	219	29	75	52

Following the build-up of butter and sugar mountains the European Community now faces the possibility of a build-up of supplies of nuclear fuels. The international situation is that by the mid-eighties there should be a dearth of fission material for atomic reactors. But the "nuclear cold war" within the Common Market is likely to end up with France and other countries building a uranium enriching plant.

Paris is opposed to the ultra-centrifuging process that is favoured by the Federal Republic, The Netherlands and Britain. The French propose building their own uranium-enriching plant using the gas diffusion process, which is also favoured by certain other countries. The French uranium plant will be producing by 1981 and so other EEC countries must agree to accept supplies and give guarantees right now.

In Brussels experts have calculated that EEC members will have no choice but to take the bulk of the French fission material and store it. Europe's atomic power stations have covered their requirements of fissile material with the United States up till 1983. Costs of storing nuclear fuels are estimated at $4,200.

The only avenue open to Europe to avoid dependence on oil from Middle Eastern sheikhs is to develop nuclear power. The mighty atom is the only feasible way of filling the energy gap which is already being mentioned but which will not really begin to bite for another five years. No one in Brussels or other European capitals fools himself into thinking otherwise.

The bone of contention between Paris, and Bonn now that the initial shock of the Arab oil blackmail is over, is the old, old question of when Europe is to become independent of other countries for its supply of fission material.

There is no dispute within the Community that all member countries should have their own uranium-enriching plants. It is the technological procedure that is in dispute.

It is not simply because of the fear that by 1985 the Arab monopoly could have been replaced by an American nuclear energy monopoly that European countries want their own atomic fuel producing plants. The main concern is that by the eightoes the United States might require is total nuclear power output for itself,

Despite the fact that experts forecast a general shortage of nuclear fuels the European Community in the early eighties will be threatened by the precise opposite – overproduction of fissile material.

Paradoxical as this may seem it is part of the nuclear philosophy pursued by the French to date in which Paris has been investing several thousand million francs for many years. Many of these millions aimed at covering domestic requirements have proved to be a mistaken investment.

For years Paris gave solid backing to nuclear reactors stocked with natural uranium. But this has since been proved to be a non-competitive procedure.

Paris looks like being caught napping again with its uranium-enrichment plans now that the British, Dutch and West Germans have reached an agreement on a new, and less costly, system of enrichment, the so-called ultra-centrifuge. Physicists of the centrifuge triumvirate believe that by 1977 the prototype centrifuge plants at Capenhurst in Britain and Almelo in The Netherlands should be ready for serious production.

Champions of the centrifuge system have two important advantages with which to approach the French. The ultra-centrifuge works economically at a relatively low capacity, which may be as low as 2,000 tons of separation per year which is equivalent to 9,000 tons of natural uranium.

The centrifuge sifts from the uranium the rare and fissile isotope U235 with a relatively low energy consumption. This is not only a commercial advantage but also better for the environment, since smaller and fewer power stations with their thermal influence on air and water are required.

The French are in favour of the so-called gas diffusion procedure with which they have many years experience at their enrichment plant in Pierrelatte, producing enriched uranium for the *force de frappe*.

Experts regard gas diffusion as an outmoded system since it is more expensive and more detrimental to the environment than the ultra-centrifuge. And gas diffusion is only of use for relatively large capacities starting at 9,000 tons of separation for enrichment, which corresponds to 40,000 tons of natural uranium.

The second disadvantage is that the French had to build one gigantic power station each for the separation of the two uranium isotopes U235 and U238.

The French seem prepared to accept the detrimental effect on the environment of this, namely the heating up of the River Rhône.

Since electric power is more expensive all over Europe than for example in the United States the French can only build their enrichment plant costing about 11,000 million francs if they have negotiated guaranteed sales for its fissile material in advance. These guarantees are required, since the French plant is not only much dearer than those in the United States and the Soviet Union, but its uranium is also considerably dearer than the fissile material produced by the ultra-centrifuge.

President Georges Pompidou realises this handicap. And for this reason he is doing his best to strike while the iron is hot. But on his recent visit to Paris Chancellor Brandt was unable to persuade President Pompidou to join the Eurodif Enrichment Club.

Nonetheless atomic trouble is brewing for Bonn. Under old Euratom terms still applying, Paris can demand that other Community members give guarantees to buy their fissile material.

In practice this would mean that in future no EEC country could make its own deals for nuclear fuels. The French would have a free market in the EEC with no outside competition.

The comment of the West German nuclear power industry on this is that Bonn would simply be swapping American supply monopoly for a French supply monopoly with the added disadvantage that the price would be higher.

Pompidou wants to take the sting out of considerations such as this. There have been indications that in certain circumstances France might consider taking part in the development of the ultra-centrifuge. But nuclear power experts in this country consider that two uranium enriching plants would be one too many.

The demand for fissile material for nuclear reactors is bound to grow in the next five to eight years by a considerable amount, however.

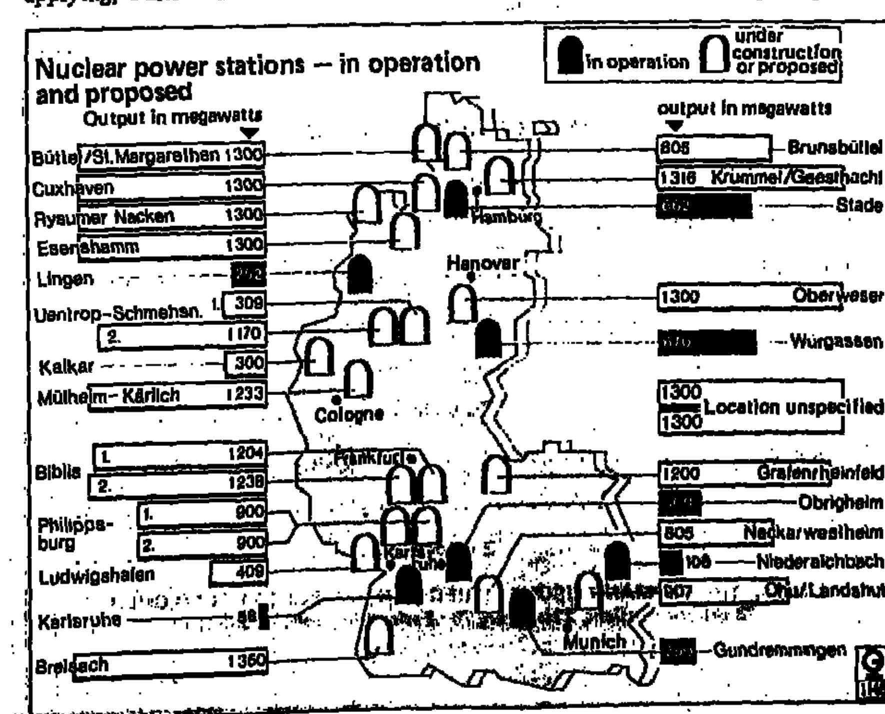
Thirty new power stations are planned for the Federal Republic between now and 1985. The greater number will be nuclear fired. The same applies to our European neighbours. So, according to the latest calculations the EEC power stations will require a total of 68,000 tons of natural uranium for enrichment.

At the moment demand and production are not operating hand in hand. Electricity producers operating on nuclear fuel tend to place orders many years in advance for the original filling their reactors require and the annual topping up.

Experts believe that all the fissile material required between now and 1983 has already been covered by orders placed with American suppliers. For this reason the French want their European partners to agree to accept stockpiles of about 40,000 tons of enrichment material annually with the Eurodif plant going into operation in 1981.

As with the butter and sugar mountains Community funds must be made available to finance the storage of nuclear fuel. A secret document originating in Brussels gives figures. The interest annually would be a good 200 million dollars. It would not be possible to start running down this surplus before the early 90s.

Hermann Bohle and Gerd Kubler
(Stuttgarter Nachrichten, 1 December 1973)



The nine plan to stand firm in the oil crisis

Henri Simonet, Vice-President of the European Commission who is responsible for fuel and power in the European Community, has suggested that a crisis staff should be formed to deal with the supply of petroleum in the nine countries of the European Community.

M. Simonet from Belgium made the suggestion at the conclusion of a two-day conference of European ministers of finance, economics and foreign affairs in Brussels.

This crisis staff would work in close cooperation with a sub-committee of the major oil companies (still to be formed). They would join forces to keep tabs on the developments regarding oil supplies in Europe.

In addition M. Simonet called for a precise survey of reserves and oil production as well as guidelines for the management of oil supplies in the European Community.

Economics and Finance ministers in the European Community are virtually in agreement that prices are bound to rise next year and there is a danger of unemployment. Basically the Ministers were agreed upon a statement by the Commission that the Nine should stand firm during the oil crisis with regard to economics and monetary policies.

Their resolution called for cooperation in combatting price rises, securing employment and promoting stable prices for raw materials. The Ministers predict that there will be difficulties in the coming year with shortages of supply not only in the energy sector. A long list of Community duties for 1974 has been drawn up, including firm statements about cuts in government spending.

The resolution promises strict control of pricing and trade gaps. All sectors of the economy were called upon to show moderation with regard to salaries, profits, dividends, rents and the like.

The European Community also plans to begin sounding out Iran about closer economic and trade ties in which oil will of course be involved.

Helmut J. Weiland
(Nordwest Zeitung, 5 December 1973)

■ ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Toxic waste incinerated off Dutch coast

Twenty to thirty miles west of Scheveningen off the Dutch North Sea coast ships not infrequently alter course because of what seems to be a ball of fire above the *Matthias II*, but subsequently abandon rescue operations on learning that this unusual craft always looks like a volcano in full eruption at night and is surmounted by a mushroom of evil-looking smoke all day.

Here off Scheveningen is an area of the North Sea policed by Holland's *Rijkswaterstaat*, or waterways board, where the Matthias is allowed to incinerate industrial waste mainly on behalf of large firms in the Federal Republic of Germany such as Bayer, BASF and Hoechst.

Since 1969 *Matthias II* and its smaller companion, the *Matthias I*, have disposed of some 150,000 tons of waste in this way.

The crew are more than a little touchy about the word "poison." Talk of this kind is designed to stir up Dutch suspicions that Holland is being used as the garbage dump of Europe.

This allergic reaction to mention of the word "poison" has now spread to the state government of Hesse, where the administration would be only too happy if the hue and cry about the so-called "poisonous waste scandal" were to abate with only twelve months to go to the next state assembly elections.

Poisonous waste dumped at Langenselbold, near Frankfurt, and associated with the Hesse scandal is to be incinerated on board the *Matthias II* as far as possible.

On 11 October the state administration signed a contract with Mannheim and Bochum firms that undertook to analyse the waste, pack it into suitable containers and ship it into the North Sea for incineration.

So far 2,000 drums of waste have been removed from the Langenselbold dump. They may be followed by another 6,000 or 12,000. No one seems to know exactly how much remains for disposal.

Starting possibly in February the Langenselbold waste will be incinerated on board the *Matthias II* under the supervision of a specialist seconded by the Hesse state government.

In berth at Rotterdam's tanker docks the ship was recently inspected by two members of the Hesse Cabinet, the newly-appointed Environment Minister Social Democrat Kollmann and Home Affairs Minsister Free Democrat Bielefeld.

The party was accompanied by journalists. The Matthias stayed at her moorings because of stormy weather, unable to carry out operations at gale forces of nine and above.

The fireship, as it were, was designed and built by the owner of the Bochum firm. It has twelve holds capable of incinerating 1,200 cubic metres of waste between them at a rate of ten to twelve tons per hour.

Once it reaches the offshore location the temperature down below is boosted to 1,450 centigrade with the aid of diesel oil and incineration is, or so the operators claim, 99.9 per cent effective.

In other words, less than a tenth of one per cent of unburnt particles remain in the exhaust fumes, which is an environmentally commendable performance.

The fumes contain substantial amounts of hydrochloric acid but it condenses, intermingles with the sea water and is no longer in evidence about 500 metres away from the vessel.

This hydrochloric acid is considered harmless even by the Dutch specialist Professor Duiker, who paints a gloomy picture of North Sea pollution but is satisfied with the record of the Matthias.

Representatives of the firm went even further, claiming that fish felt rather snug in the vicinity. "The fish seem to like it," pressmen were told.

Regularly every half-hour the ship's position, the incinerator temperature gauge and that of the bilge pump in use are recorded on film in order to enable the Dutch government to check what was burnt when and where.

Incineration costs between 100 and 200 Marks a ton. Shipment from the Ruhr to Rotterdam costs an additional 30 to 35 Marks a ton by road or ten to fifteen Marks by inland waterway.

So Hesse is going to have to pay heavily for the pleasure of parting company with industrial waste dumped illegally at dozens of locations. Langenselbold is far from being the only one. At a dump in Gross-Krotzenburg, near Hanau, only 100 metres from the Main, more than a million tons of waste have been illegally tipped into a disused gravel pit extending down to the level of the water-table.

Hesse's poisonous waste scandal will still take some living down, and an expensive business it is likely to be!

Helmut Herles

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, 29 November 1973)

Munich threatened with water rationing

Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger

On a day – of all days – when rain, snow and cold descended on Munich, more than 200 cars crashed in a matter of hours on icy roads and more bad news came on the oil front, the two and a half million people of Munich and environs were told that from January on water would probably have to be rationed.

Oskar Vetter, a local government official responsible for Munich industry, painted a gloomy picture. Firms would have to cut back their water consumption drastically. Car-washing, lawn-watering and refilling swimming-pools would be prohibited.

Water pressure might not be sufficient for what remained to reach the upper storeys of tenement blocks. The city's many fountains would run dry. The entire population would be called on to scrimp and save water.

News as bad as this had previously only been reported from New York, assuredly a city that could be rated out-of-the-ordinary. Now the chicken had come home to roost with a vengeance.

The water shortage was as predictable as the oil shortage had been, and oddly enough it too was brought to a head by unfriendly action on the part of the people perched on top of what are currently the only available reserves.

The water Munich so badly needs is only sixty miles away: the plentiful pure water below the Loisach valley, near Garmisch-Partenkirchen. Munich has been trying to gain access to the water here for seventy years; for the past fourteen there has been legal wrangling over what is known as the Oberau Project.

Near the village of Oberau the Munich authorities have for some time had three pumping stations at the ready, but one legal battle after another has been fought to stop Munich from tapping the local water resources. After fourteen years the Garmisch local authorities have finally and irrevocably been refused permission.

Influential local people, including the Ettal monks, have commissioned one report after another to persuade the public that allowing Munich to use local water reserves would mean the ruin of ten villages totalling five and a half thousand inhabitants.

The countryside would be devastated, would waste away, they are told. Gigantic placards line the local roads proclaiming that Munich has murder in mind.

In order further to emphasise local resistance to the Munich water board's plans the burgomaster of Farchant, near Garmisch, recently sponsored a weekend protest demonstration.

Fifteen hundred Loisachtal farmers marched with burning torches to the water wells and sang their local song. Suddenly one of the pumping stations was on fire. "Arson. No doubt about it," the police commented.

Munich now plans to introduce water emergency measures and lodge further appeals that may well go as far as the Constitutional Court in Karlsruhe in an attempt to compel Loisachtal to allow it access to the water needed.

Munich's existing water resources to the north of the city are slowly running dry. After three dry summers the water-level has sunk so low that none is left. What is more, provisional permission granted by the regional administration of Upper Bavaria to tap this water expires at the end of December.

So Munich has really run well and truly dry at long last.

Karl Stankiewitz

(Kölner Stadt Anzeiger, 29 November 1973)

Bremen citizens sounded out on environmental problems

In Bremen, the country's smallest state, anyone who wants to lodge an environmental complaint at the dead of night can dial 32 33 32 and a telephone-answering device will record the complaint for playback by local-authority officials the following morning.

The aim of the service is to provide local people with an unbureaucratic means of warning the authorities about environmental pollution. Whether it will bring more to light than the usual laments about the bad habits of the dog next door or the waste-paper basket at the bus stop across the road always being full to overflowing remains to be seen.

The department responsible for the telephone-answering service has been warned by a Godesberg market research agency not to place too much trust in the zeal of the general public regardless of favourable survey results.

Bremen Senate commissioned from Infas of Bad Godesberg a survey to determine whether local people really felt environmental conservation to be as crucial an issue as they were continually assured it is.

The pollsters asked 1,426 Bremen people 59 questions each and came to the conclusion that three quarters of the general public are immediately undertaken the quality of life will in the long run become intolerable.

Most of the sample questioned were prepared if need be to pay the price. Seventy-nine per cent were willing to pay more for environmentally sounder detergents. Eight-one per cent were in favour of manufacturing clean-air cars even if the retail price were to increase by 1,000 Marks as a result.

Eighty-five per cent of those questioned were prepared to pay for compulsory inspection of their domestic heating units.

Seventy-seven per cent of the sample were in favour of fifty-Mark fines for litter louts and 82 per cent of Bremen people questioned approved of the idea of an entire range of fines for environmental offences.

Most Bremen people, the market researchers discovered, feel that technological progress is largely to blame for pollution and other environmental damage and risks.

If what they say is to be believed Bremen people would even be prepared to accept a slow-down in progress if further damage could thereby be forestalled.

Down by the banks of the polluted Weser people seem so willing to make personal sacrifices in the interest of environmental conservation that the market researchers smell a rat.

"Over and above a general feeling that environmental conservation is important the man in the street is not in the picture as regards the deeper-seated problems associated with this complicated topic," Infas pollsters warn.

"A subtler and more detailed environmental awareness does not exist and it is doubtful whether one ever will," the survey concludes.

Claus-Werner Caro

(Die Welt, 28 November 1973)

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■ THE ARTS

Trevor Griffith's *Occupations* premiered in Hamburg

When is a nation or State in an objective revolutionary situation? This basic question asked by the Communist International always played a major role in the years of confusion following the First World War. It is also the main theme of a play by Trevor Griffiths, a Briton who attended a Jesuit school in Manchester and is now on the staff of the BBC.

Occupations (subtitled *Red Sunday in Turin)* deals with the revolutionary events of September 1920 when the Turin workers took over the metallurgical industry. The revolt was ended after an agreement was reached with the government.

The workers were promised a few temporary materal benefits and the principle of worker control was recognised though never put into effect. The factories were returned to their owners after a ballot among the workers resulted in a majority for the agreement.

That is the historical background of the play. It centres around a delegate of the Third International, the Bulgarian revolutionary Kabak, otherwise Kabakchiev, and the Turin Socialist leader Antonio Gramsci, a journalist whose arrest Mussolini ordered in 1926.

Frankfurter Allgemeine

Kabak had only received general orders from Moscow. He had not been sent specifically to Turin. However, he decided that the revolution had to be started some time and that Turin was a suitable starting point, the spark that would ignite the whole of Italy.

Gramsci saw the position differently. A revolution started by Turin would once again isolate the Turin workers, he claimed. They should not be sacrificed for this purpose.

Gramsci employs the argument of love: "How can a person love a collective if he has not loved the individual? "

This, he states, is not petty bourgeois idealism. Love is the only correct dialectical link between the leaders and the led.

Gramsci therefore supports a ballot among the workers while Kabak rejects this course. But after the majority of the workers have opted for the agreement with the government, Gramsci too believes that action of this type only makes the workers more aimless. Revolution should be prepared in much the same way as war.

The problems of the situation are not presented with great dramatic force. The highlights are the encounter between Gramsci and Kabak shortly before the interval and Gramsci's address to the Turin workers from a ladder.

At this point of Christof Nel's production in Cologne the theatre door opened, a red flag was borne into the stalls and the reactions of the agitated mob penetrated the auditorium. "Beware of rhetoric, even mine," Gramsci states in conclusion.

As far as the play restricts itself to this central clash, it can claim a certain historical interest and the presentation is skilful. German audiences will be reminded of the revolutionary movement affecting large areas of Saxony in March 1921 and the hectic discussions that took place within the Third International after revolution had been quashed.



A scene from Trevor Griffith's *Occupations* (Photo: Stefan [illegible])

But Griffiths goes further and the additional material he introduces is enough to make you wince. He presents a cancerous, death-racked, drug-addicted Russian countess who once joined Kabak when Soviet troops occupied her estates. She is totally bed-ridden and personifies the age that is dying. Her maid too plays a symbolic role.

Interest revives temporarily shortly after the interval when Kabak, now expelled from Turin, discusses capitalist investment in the Soviet Union with a Fiat representative.

Lothar Ostermann portrays the Fiat representative as a member of the bourgeoisie who is able to conform to whatever situation faces him. He could have walked straight from Georg Grosz's depictions of the ruling classes.

The best performance of the evening came from Peter Franke as the nervous, gesticulating, intellectual, chain-smoking, hunchbacked Antonio Gramsci. Hans Schulze played the revolutionary Kabak rather too coarsely.

The set, a bare hotel room, was designed by Ilona Freyer. Nel's production left a number of questions unanswered, especially at the start of the play when the lighting effects were not generally obvious.

On the whole, the play provides no grounds for ideological indignation. Ignoring the special historic case, we are well-acquainted with the basic problem, though on a higher, more intellectual level.

Hans Schwab-Felisch

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 3 December 1973)

Opera of Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* produced in Augsburg

An accidental killing, a despotic employer whose wife is generally believed to possess all the talents of a whore, the threat of a lynching, murder through love and a good deal of dreaming of happiness are the ideal elements for an opera, or so Carlisle Floyd thought after reading John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men.*

He was so fascinated by the work that he could not resist the temptation of turning it into an opera. Written in 1965 and premiered in Seattle in 1970, the opera was given its first European performance in Augsburg.

But it was soon obvious that the work had not come eight years too late but more like fifty. Carlisle Floyd has written an effective opera with the gift of putting across emotions and pleasing the audience.

But the music did not clarify the action (it was more like a background accompaniment) nor was it independent enough to gain life of its own. A watered-down Puccini with a number of trendy additions?

Carlisle Floyd also made the decisive mistake of casting Lennie as a tenor and George as a bass-baritone. Deep voices are after all able to evoke greater response. The clumsy Lennie who accidently strokes to death everything that comes into his hands actually appears more namby-pamby than his clever friend George who in the original is more the type of the cunning small man.

Augsburg Opera House invested a good deal of effort into the opera's European premiere. Eberhard Bäumler conducted with a fine sense of drama while Stephan Mettin's production was unable to open up any new perspectives.

Though the ensemble was a homogenous unit, special mention must be made of the two protagonists – Hans Kiemer as Georg and Wolfgang Witte as Lennie – as well as Carol Todd as the farmer's wife. Applause was stormy as the opera deliberately caters for the public's taste.

Rainer Wagner

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 4 December 1973)

A scene from the Ezra Pound opera *Testament* performed in Hamburg (Photo: Fritz Peyer)

Ezra Pound's only opera produced in Hamburg

Fifty years ago, in 1923, Ezra Pound reached for his note-pad to compose a light opera on the life of François Villon and once again demonstrate his merits as a composer.

Prior to his arrest the French mediaeval poet is sitting among his friends writing his *Testament.* Sparse dialogue provides the scant framework of a plot uniting the fifteen musical numbers.

The chanson-type ballads smacking of mediaeval French folklore are accompanied by a small seventeen-man orchestra. The BBC has twice resurrected Ezra Pound's minor opera to demonstrate his twin talents. But both were pure concert performances.

Hamburg State Opera has now performed the work on the small stage of Altona's *Fabrik.* However, it was not Ezra Pound's original opera that was performed but a cross-bred containing a number of innovations.

Ezra Pound sits in a cage opposite the stage, the same cage in which he was imprisoned by American troops at the end of the Second World War. Pound had fallen prey to Fascist ideology while in Italy and broadcast attacks against President Roosevelt.

Passages from Ezra Pound's *Pisa Cantos* interrupt the action of the actual opera. Two varying stylistic levels are interconnected. Two poets dating from different centuries engage in a dialogue – Villon, the vagabond poet who narrowly escaped the gallows and Ezra Pound, the scourge of capitalism and oneupmanship.

Parallels can certainly be found in the attitudes of protest adopted by the two social critics. But can their personal fate be viewed outside the historical context?

Hans Ludwig Hirsch, the musical director, did not restrict himself to playing Pound's *Pisa Cantos* with the aid of electronics but also set some of Villon's poems to music. It is little wonder that a good deal remained obscure and that the uninitiated were unable to differentiate Ezra Pound's work from that of Hans Ludwig Hirsch.

Götz Friedrich's production benefited from the workshop atmosphere of the Fabrik. With Ude Krokow as Villon, Toni Blankenheim as Jean Cotart, Sigrid von Richthofen in the parodied role of the helmet-forger and Jutta-Renate Ihloff as Rosie, the opera was full of dramatic life right up to the final *danse macabre.*

Hans Chirstoph Worbs

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 5 December 1973)

■ THINGS SEEN

Pre-Raphaelites in Baden-Baden

Hugo von Hofmannsthal viewed the paintings of the British artist Edward Burne-Jones as "figures with an almost mystical sadness in which sensuous eyes with naive doll-like expressions capture child-like epochs of art and therefore have an infinite bearing with their allegorical activities and suffering".

Forty-two years later in 1936 Salvador Dali praised the "flagrant Surrealism of the English Pre-Raphaelites" and spoke of "the necrophiliac spring" and the "slippery flesh of the most guilty sensuous day dreams".

These remarks by Hofmannsthal and Dali clearly show why the art of the Pre-Raephalite Brotherhood, founded in London in 1848, and why the soulful pictures of Hunt, Millais, Burne-Jones and Dante Gabriel Rossetti have almost consistently been passed off in the twentieth century as Victorian bad taste.

This art with its bloodless and sentimental sultry qualities is a provocative counterpart to the spirit of the technological age, particularly to the twentieth-century ideology of rationalism and also to the spirit of enlightenment and sexual emancipation.

But from a purely artistic point of view there are many points where the Pre-Raphaelites and modern art quite astoundingly have much in common.

These parallels were probably the reason for the renewed concern for Victorian art that had its roots in 1964 with an exhibition in New York. The Pre-Raphaelite exhibition at present being held in Baden-Baden – the first ever in Germany – marks the genre's high point on the European mainland.

Under the heading of Pre-Raphaelite the seven young founders of the Brotherhood were not so much protesting against the famous Italian Renaissance painter as against his decadent academic plagiarists in the mid-nineteenth century.

The Pre-Raphaelites sought allies for their protest against the perspective-illusionist Academic Painting of their English contemporaries in the linear two-dimensional sacred pictures.

John Ruskin, the art critic who was so decisive in the breakthrough of the Pre-Raphaelites said: "Tend to paint artless things rather than pretty pictures. Tend back to archaic honesty. Turn to Nature. Do not reject anything. Do not select anything, do not despise anything."

This sounds like a manifesto of Realism, but it only partially and temporarily leads painters in the direction of anti-salon art.

Arthur Hughes and Ford Madox Brown, only a friend of and not a brother of the Brotherhood, fulfilled Ruskin's demands – for instance with the landscape of Windermere, which Brown painted in a rainstorm while sheltering under an umbrella.

Burne-Jones and Gabriel Rossetti, the real stars of this school, place all their detailed Realism on the formal carpet of a stylised compostition, which quickly approximates to the Symbolistic day-dream of the last third of the century.

The postures of an "aesthetic Church" and the oppressive wiles of Victorian morality filter through the Reality. Themes such as the big city, poverty, industrialisation, sexuality, London as Karl Marx observed it are by and large left out of the picture.

This is all the more surprising because Ruskin and his fellow-in-arms William Morris are confirmed champions of Socialism.

This first major battle of artists against Capitalism and the Industrial Revolution tailed off into a new aestheticism. This a fate that has befallen similar battles since then.

First of all comes Naturalism, the dream of a cooperatively created art as the precursor of a rejuvenad society, the decided extension of the aesthetic into the arts and crafts as a protest against the ugliness of the machine age, finally a kind of modern Concept Art in the linking of painting and literature.

In the end it is a victory for the heroines with long hair who look emptily into the void, the precious colour of the palette used. Precious ikons for the living room of industrialists on the make: Helen, the Virgin of the Holy Grail, Perseus and the sea nymphs, Hamlet and Ophelia, Dante and Beatrice.

It is a green and gold decadent world of sagas and songs with its head in a cloud of incense looking down on the ugly age of mass production factories. Beardsley and Whistler, Klimt and Stuck, *L'art pour l'art* and *Art Nouveau* (Jugendstil) are on the way.

Today the nineteenth century is back in vogue and the pictures of the Pre-Raephalites, so long scorned, have once more come back into public favour. The pictures are finding buyers.

Burne-Jones' tapestry *Love and the Pilgrim* was sold at an auction this year for 47 times the price it reached in 1942. Stuttgart Staatsgalerie recently bought *The Perseus Cycle* by Burne-Jones who was also represented at Baden-Baden Kunsthalle.

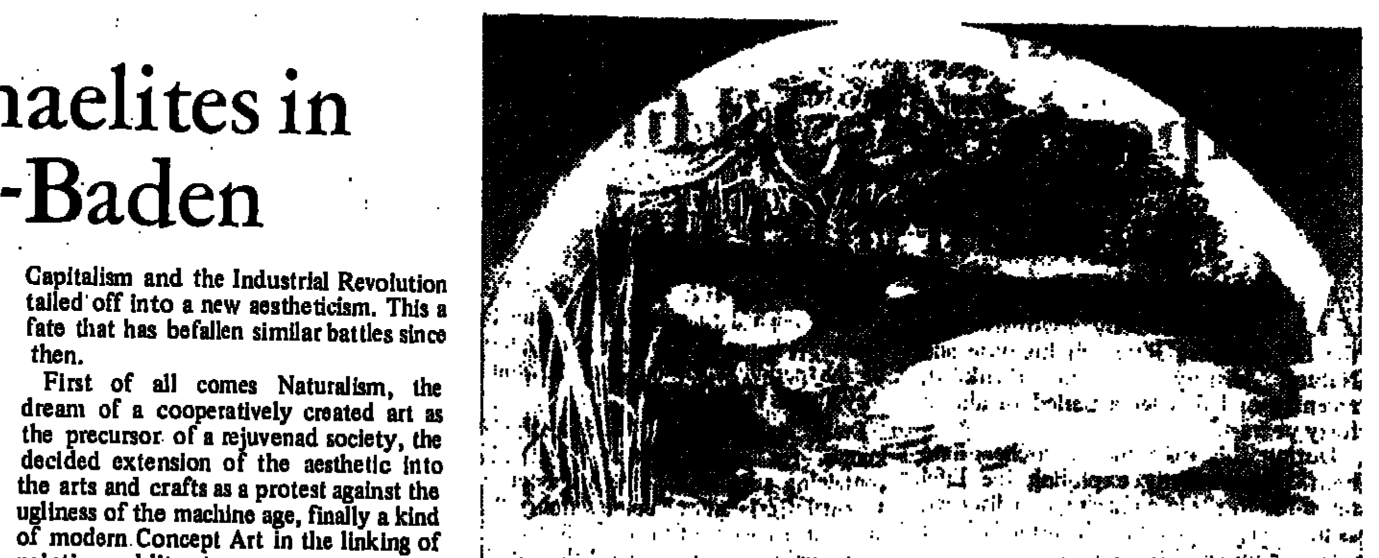
Kandinsly called the Pre-Raephalites "seekers for an inner world among externals". One of the reasons why they are being dug out again is that art dealers have long since over-played the great classic schools and are now looking for peripheral figures. Art historians have grazed upon all-important artists from Giotto to Picasso and are looking for new worlds to conquer.

Talk of nostalgia and rediscovery does not help much. Apart from a few masterly drawings and paintings, particularly by Rossetti and Brown most works of the Pre-Raephalites remain what they always were, sentimental escapist art.

Mathias Schreiber

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, 29 November 1973)

Jorge Castillo's two-colour etching (Photo: Katalog)



Sir John Millais' *Ophelia* (Photo: Katalog)

Tribute to Picasso in Hanover

Hannoversche Allgemeine

Hanover's Kestner Society is showing its many sides in the run-up to Christmas. While the lower floor of its gallery invites visitors to the glowing mirror-world of Italian Michelangelo Pistoletto, the upper floor is presenting *Hommage à Picasso* which was first presented in July at the Berlin Nationalgalerie.

In the meantime further works have been added to this, but a number of sketches are still missing, notably those by Bernard Schultze and Günther Uecker.

The exhibition confirms the first impressions it gave in Berlin as a project offering a unique cross-section of contemporary art as influenced by Pablo Picasso.

There is no denying that there are vast differences of quality between one work and another. Nor can one hide the fact that a number of the works have no direct connection with the work of the late great artist. But it cannot be disputed that among the approximately fifty etchings, lithographs, wood-cuts and silk-screen prints many are of the highest quality, including works by Pierre Alechinsky, Max Bill, Pol Bury, Lynn Chadwick, Eduardo Chillida, HAP Grieshaber, Alfred Hrdlicka, Tiri Kolar, Jacques Lipchitz, Giacomo Manzù, Robert Matta, Joan Miro, Edouard Pignon, Antoni Tapies, Jean Tinguely, Fritz Wotruba, Hans Bellmer, David Hockney, Henry Moore or Frank Stella. It would be difficult to imagine a more impressive collection of creative talent.

Among the typical folios which many artists have tried are the colour etchings of Richard Hamilton, 51, a Londoner, who was the subject of a revolutionary pop-art exhibition in London seventeen years ago. It seemed obvious to select one or two of the multitude of figures created by Picasso and produce one's own variations on the theme.

This is Hamilton's procedure as well. But the particular charm of Hamilton's work is that he takes as his thema a famous painting by another great Spanish artist, *Las Meninas* by Velazquez, Philip IV's court artist.

Hamilton creates the figures of his painting from the seventeenth century against characteristic Picasso figures in such a way that he crystallises the most important periods of the artist's life. The little princess, for instance, is given a Cubist treatment, the dog in the foreground is converted into a bull, almost Picasso's trademark.

And Velazquez, standing in front of a large canvas with brush and palette is replaced by Picasso. He looks down at the person viewing the picture with a strict and serious mien. On his breast are the insignia of the Communist Party.

This picture is one of the most important in the collection because of the humour and imagination that has gone into it and the outstanding technique which cannot fail to capture the attention.

Rudolf Lange

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 30 November 1973)

Trier Cathedral restorations begin

Polish church restorers have set about renovations to Trier Cathedral which had to be closed eight years ago because of the precarious state of the fabric. The Cathedral is due to be opened again on 1 May 1974. The Polish team will restore the Sakramentsaltar, chancel and Heiligtumskammer where the Holy Shroud is kept.

In addition the Poles plan to restore all monuments and altars in this, the oldest German bishop's church, which was built in the fourth century AD by Constantine the Great.

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 30 November 1973)

■ ARCHAEOLOGY

Important fossil finds made in the Eifel

A large-scale geological research project conducted by scientists from the Senckenberg Research Institute and Natural History Museum, Frankfurt, recently ended after a period of almost forty years.

During this time the researchers have been systematically exploring the Eifel range for fossils in an attempt to discover, as precisely as possible, the boundaries of various geological formations.

Similar research projects are still being conducted in other parts of Europe. Researchers are conducting a systematic research for the fossils of amphibious saurians on Lake Lugano while slate from a quarry in the Hunsrück is being X-rayed for traces of past life.

All these ventures indicate the new concept and methods of modern palaeontology. Researchers are no longer satisfied with one random find that has been picked up somewhere and catalogued by a museum.

Instead, interesting sites are systematically exploited in order to gain as complete as possible an idea of the animal life at one particular spot or the succession of living organisms through the different geological periods. The research conducted in the Eifel is part of an international plan to standardise fossil classification.

The Eifel project was begun in 1937. A trench several metres deep was dug in a rock formation containing fossils and everything that looked like a fossil was taken out of the trench wall and collected.

The researchers' concern for the fossils was not due solely to the fact that they were an indication of past life. The succession of certain species and communities of fauna is also the most important yardstick for geological history. Though dating by fossil cannot be precise, it is possible to gain a rough idea of the period when the rock in which they lie was formed.

Every palaeontologist and geologist knows for instance that any rock containing a belemnite (the backbone of a cuttlefish) must come from the uppermost regions of the chalk formation accordingly known as the belemnitella mucronata.

This geological clock can be developed to great precision if the strata of a geological formation can be formed without any chronological interval from a rich supply of fossils.

Geologists from all over the world make pilgrimages to areas of this type. A particularly good example of such a region is the Eifel range in which the rocks of a large part of the Devonian formation can be found in complete form.

These rocks are particularly rich in fossils. The limestone found here contains vast quantities of fossilised crabs, mussels, worms and coral from the primeval sea that covered the area three hundred million years ago.

The Eifel research project concentrated mainly on the typically German Devonian formation. As the findings could not be evaluated before the Second World War began and were then destroyed when the Institute was bombed, the project had to be started anew.

New trenches were dug in 1969, 1971 and 1972, some of them several hundred metres long. The last trench, only forty to fifty metres long, was dug under Professor R. Werner's direction in the Schönecken-Wettelsdorf area in September 1973.

Work was conducted with a bulldozer, as with all post-war projects. The bulldozer removers the soil and the uppermost weathered strata of the limestone before striking the hard, firm, unweathered rock.

Geologists and technicians then examine layer after layer of the hard rock for fossils. Each fragment of a shark fin's barb, a coral or lichen-dweller had to be removed, wrapped in newspaper, numbered and classified. Only efficient organisation and neatness produce results. Dozens of different fossils are often found in the narrow strata on the edge of a trench.

Collecting projects have now been concluded. The finds obtained in the last trench are now stored in the Senckenberg Research Institute prior to precise identification by means of magnifying glass or microscope.

The fossils, covering fifteen to twenty million years of geological history, are classified with the help of the Research Association. Scientific analysis will allow researchers to estimate the age of the Devonian strata with greater precision.

An interesting chance discovery made during the project is the incidence of strange clay layers between the limestone banks. They were initially thought to be weathering strata but microscopic examination has revealed them to be layers of volcanic ash which were deposited on the bed of the sea that formerly covered the Eifel region.

This was the first indication that the Eifel, a typical volcanic region in recent geological history up to as recently as eight thousand years ago, was also the scene of continual volcanic activity 320 or 330 million years ago.

Researchers still do not know the site of these volcanic craters that spewed their ash over the Eifel sea. They may have been situated on what is now the right bank of the Rhine. Whatever the case, the betonite clay formed from the volcanic ash provides geologists with an important yardstick for dating Earth history.

Harald Steinert

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, 3 November 1973)

Work continues at Celtic dig near Ingolstadt

Shortly before the end of this year's dig in the ancient. Celtic town of Manching, near Ingolstadt, Dr Franz Schubert, head of the Archaeological Institute's Roman-Germanic Committee, claimed that these excavations would remain of supreme importance to research into the Celtic way of life. "The ground still contains its secrets," he commented.

Caesar used the Latin word *oppidum* (town) to describe the fortified settlements of the Celtic tribes who lived in what is now France. But Celtic towns of similar importance also existed in Southern Germany in the first century BC.

One of the most important settlements of this type, if not the capital of the Vindelicians, sprang up on the south bank of the Danube close to what is now the village of Manching and not very far from Ingolstadt.

The only visible evidence of a mangnificent past is provided by a five-mile long wall encircling a settlement of some ten thousand acres. Its streeets, houses and artefacts lie buried beneath the surface and are only gradually surrendering their mysteries to the team of archaeologists.

This *oppidum*, formerly inhabited by twenty thousand persons, is important for research into the late Celtic age as it is the only settlement within the broad area of Europe the Celts covered that has yielded anything like rich findings.

When a military air base was built near Manching before the Second World War, bulldozers uncovered strangely coloured strips of earth which only archaeologists were able to recognise as traces of a prehistoric settlement. Excavations began though they did not progress very far as the priority given to the airfield took no account of the interests of research.

The Archaeological Institute's excavations were resumed under Professor Werner Kraemer's direction in 1955. Experts describe past findings as overwhelming. More than one million fragments of pottery and countless coins, ornaments and bronze and iron items have been uncovered.

This year's dig covering two thousand square metres of land disproved the previously held belief that glass production was only to be found in the Mediterranean region during the pre-Christian era.

Past excavators found glass bracelets and necklaces, most of them fashionably coloured blue, but it was only this year that the team of researchers entered the quarter of the Celtic glass-blowers. It is hoped to penetrate the centre of glass production during the next dig and the archaeologists expect to discover a number of interesting facts.

To go by the outlines of the streets, squares and houses, the ancient Celtic town was built on stilts. The houses had walls of wattle and daub and possessed a cellar and a kitchen midden which should prove to be the most lucrative sites.

One of the largest buildings was a hundred-metre long and sixty-metre broad hall that was either used as a place of assembly or as a store. Archaeologists have found a temple enclosed by a wall.

But the greatest accomplishment of these Celtic builders is probably the eight-kilometre long city wall which stands at a height of eight metres and is four metres broad. The fortifications were built without the use of mortar.

From the finds already made the Vindelicians must have been small people, only 1.60 metres tall on average. They kept large herds of oxen, pigs and sheep though, to judge from skeletons found, the animals too were smaller than their present-day counterparts.

The town's artisans were able to forge swords and shields and produce pottery. As well as the secrets of glass production they were well-acquainted with the advantages of cash trading, as the discovery of coins in the *oppidum* indicates.

The townsfolk probably lived a contented, hard-working life before events overtook them around the year 16 BC. A number of traces indicate the bloody tragedy that took place in this year. Strips of ash found in the soil mark the outlines of streets and buildings.

Archaeologists assume that the Vindelicians were attacked by the Romans who set fire to their capital. The inhabitants must have fled into the cellars where they were massacred by the invaders. A number of human skeletons with broken bones and split skulls have been found beneath the spot where houses used to be.

Alfred Heueck

(Frankfurter Rundschau, 4 December 1973)

Neanderthal bivouac excavated at Rheindahlen

Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger

Dreeson Quarry in Rheindahlen, a Mönchengladbach suburb, has long been considered an important source for archaeological finds dating from the Early Stone Age.

Bonn's Rheinisches Landesmuseum has commisioned Cologne University's department of primeval history to continue excavations at the site. This year a group of students headed by Hartmut Thieme spent two months excavating a new section of the site. Their finds are now on exhibition in Rheindahlen.

The layer that attracted particular interest containe living quarters from the Neanderthal period. Although this site has only been partly uncovered and studied, the archeaologists are already able to recognise it as a Neanderthal bivouac, the first discovered in Western or Central Europe. Previously bivouacs of this type had only been unearthed in the Soviet Union.

Researchers have been able to point out the outlines of huts at many of the Russian sites. Apart from that only cases are known. The best-known example is the cave in the Neanderthal near Düsseldorf.

Next year the archaeologists from Cologne University plan to excavate the whole of the site. They will also employ statistical methods and a computer programme. Their main concern is to calculate the precise distribution of the individual finds.

If for instance small splinters and other deposits are found within a circular area this indicates that a tent once stood on the spot. The research team hopes to use this statistical method to discover the structure of the encampment and, if possible, gain new information about the customs of Neanderthal Man.

Research into primeval history has now switched its greatest centre of interest to the social conditions of people living in these ancient times. The finds at Dreesen Quarry have thrown more light on this period. The Neanderthal era is considered particularly important as it immediately precedes the emergence of homo sapiens.

Apart from the site's basic importance as the first Neanderthal bivouac found in Western or Central Europe, a number of other objects discovered there have awoken the interest of archaeologists.

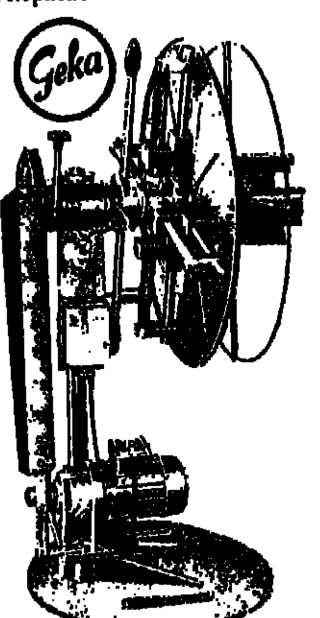
For instance a flint-head with a cylindrical base was found on the site. This type of implement is unique for the Germany of that time and indicates that flintheads were presumably attached to lances by Stone Age Man.

The exavators also came across traces of a tent. Discolorations of the soil indicate the holes where the tent-pegs of wood or mammoth ivory were once placed. The most important item found during the latest dig was a fragment of a whetstone which the archaeologists believe was used to sharpen bone or wooden tips. The whetstone is unique for this period.

While this implement used to produce other implements provides new insight into the manufacturing skills of Neanderthal Man, the archaeologists found that most of their other discoveries confirmed their assumptions about the customs of Stone Age Man.

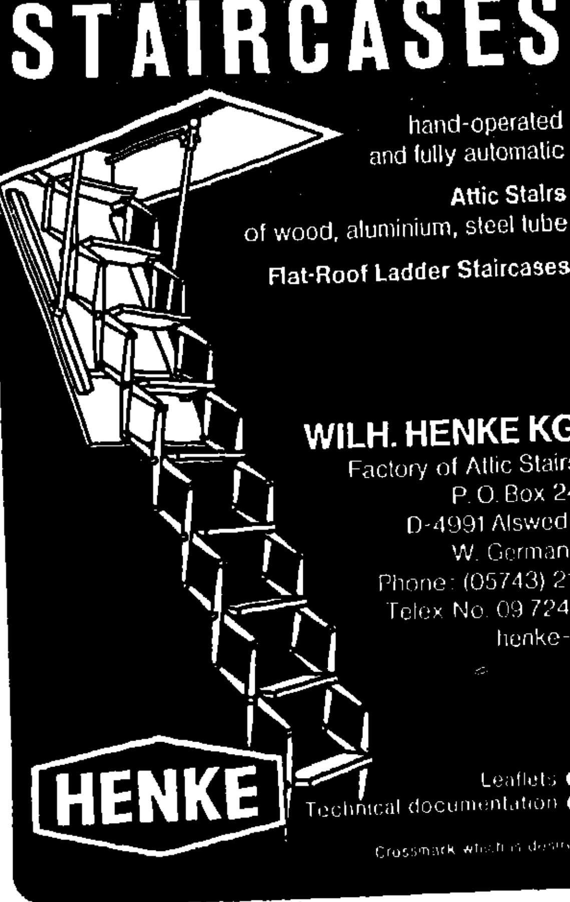
Werner Lippert

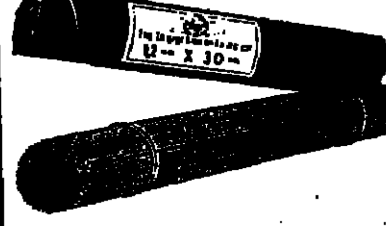
(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, 1 December 1973)

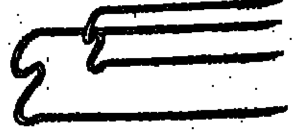
















■ EATING AND DRINKING

Four just men ensure that German wine is just so

DER TAGESSPIEGEL

The scene has a slightly Gothic touch to it. Four men are seated round a table, on which fifty bottles of wine have been placed. The bottles' labels have been concealed by a sheet of paper. In front of the bottles there are fifty glasses, each half full.

From time to time one of the four takes a sip of the wine, makes a gargling sound with it in his throat, rolls the wine round his tongue and then spits it out into a bucket.

The four men are wine experts who regularly meet in groups of four in various places to carry out tests on behalf of the wine control office. They are representatives of vineyard owners, owners of wine cellars, wine dealers associations and experienced wine-drinkers.

The reason for their activities is the new legislation that came into effect in 1972, putting an end to the chaotic situation that prevailed as regards labelling and defining various qualities of wine. The new legislation made it obligatory to indicate on the label what the bottle contained.

Wine-drinkers have taken seriously the system of numbers that the wine control office has introduced to designate wines, and these designations, introduced by the government with the full participation of the wine industry as a whole have quickly become widely known.

Official controls for wine divided into three categories:

1. Legislation governing vine cultivation guarantees the choice of suitable terrain and vines appropriate to the climate and type of soil.
2. Official tests of quality are based on control of the crop during the grape harvest and includes a careful analysis of minimum requirements in the various grades of quality. Analyses are undertaken in officially recognised laboratories and expert tasting tests carried out by an unbiased commission.
3. Snap checks on wine offered to the public for sale ensure that official stipulations are being observed.

Official tests of quality are the central aspect of the controls being enforced. When a wine-grower applies to have his wine designated with a *Prädikat* three bottles of the vintage in question must me sent to the testing office. Two of these must be laid down for eventual testing after a period of two years.

On average three or four per cent of all applications are rejected or the wine is given a lower quality rating. If a wine is rejected for a quality rating it can be resubmitted for consideration. It is permissible to filter wines and mix various wines, to filter off sediment. This too is among the arts of the *Kellermeister*.

Back to the four gentlemen of the wine control commission. When they do their wine tasting all they know is the area of the vineyard, the vintage and the type of grape. They judge the wine according to four criteria: colour, clearness, bouquet and taste.

They mark each of these on a scale of twenty points. The lowest figure for a simple *Qualitätswein* is eleven. A *Trockenbeerenauslese* (vin de pourriture noble) must score at least seventeen.

What the wine-lover drinks for pleasure is hard work for the wine-testers. Each of them must test on average between fifty and seventy wines according to the four criteria and mark the wine as his conscience dictates. Very little is drunk. To keep a clear head it is essential that the members of the commission spit out the wine, which is a tantalising experience.

If three of the testing commission or all of them agree, the wine receives its *Prädikat*. But if as few as two disagree the wine cannot be thus honoured. Up till now about seven hundred million litres of German wine have been given a *Prädikat*, indicating their high quality according to the new wine laws.

The eleven official testing centres in the wine growing states of Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria, Hesse, North Rhine-Westphalia, Rhineland Palatinate and the Saar have exercised their judgment in almost 135,000 individual cases.

The varying quality of the two vintages 1971 and 1972 showed that the testing centres are able to cope with major variations and huge wine crops.

The new wine laws differ greatly from those in most other Common Market countries (except France) by their strictness. This has proved itself in practice. Wine-growers approve the system as sensible and useful and it has made a complicated market far easier for the layman to understand. *K. Gerber*

(Der Tagesspiegel, 29 November 1973)

Sherry is on the up and up

Along with cognac, vodka and whisky sherry (alcohol content between 18 and 22 per cent) has now become one of the 'in' drinks in the Federal Republic. Executives at the wine-importing company *Epikur*, a subsidiary of the Deinhard *Sekt* organisation, consider the change to sherry, "the light wine drink" a change in public taste.

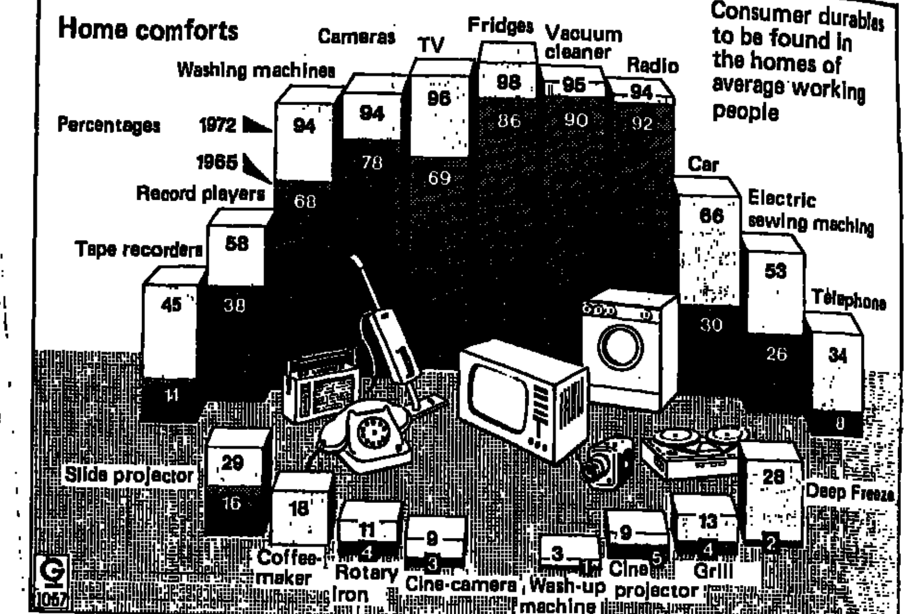
Tourism has played a part in the increase in sherry drinking. On holiday people are introduced to the drink from Andalusia. When they get home drinking it has a touch of "nostalgia" about it, reminiscent of the good times on vacation.

Epikur, since 1906 agents for the "Dry Sack" label, holds a leading position in sherry sales in this country and now supplies a third of demand.

Williams & Humbert, founded in 1875, now part of the Rumasa group, with extensive vineyards in Andalusia, has recently purchased 1,000 *Morgen* of land with a view to meeting the increased demand for sherry. The firm already handles 45 per cent of all sherry exports.

Williams & Humbert already owns 375,000 acres of vineyards and has 750,000 acres of land suitable for vine cultivation.

(Die Welt, 5 December 1973)



The prosperous Germanies

NEUE Hannoversche

The GDR has the highest standard of living of the seven member-States of Comecon; among the nine member-nations of the European Economic Community the Federal Republic enjoys the highest standard of living, according to statistics recently published, giving the GNP for 1972 of the countries involved.

The economic expression GNP covers the value of total economic production throughout the country. The per capita GNP gives a fairly objective idea of the level of private prosperity.

Using a dollar basis inhabitants in the German Democratic Republic achieved 2,730 dollar units GNP. Czechoslovakia is the second country in the Comecon list with 2,440 units per inhabitant. Then came the Soviet Union with 1,930 units, Hungary 1,800, Poland 1,550 units, Rumania 1,130 units and Bulgaria 840 units.

In the EEC the Federal Republic is at the top of the list with 4,170 dollar units per inhabitant, Denmark 4,050 dollar units, Britain, 2,870 dollar units, Italy 2,170 units and Eire 1,850 units.

(Neue Hannoversche, 1 December 1973)

Good news for oenophilists

Wine-growing countries have enjoyed a bumper harvest of good quality and wine-drinkers can expect stable prices for higher quality wines. The firm of Racke, Bingen, has conducted a survey indicating that world production was 330 million hectolitres, twenty-three per cent up on last year's production.

Consumption of wine in the Federal Republic over the past ten years has doubled to 21.1 litres per head of population annually. This considerably increased demand could only be met by importing more and more wines from abroad so that now the ratio between foreign and home-produced wines is fifty-fifty.

Retail prices increased in 1972 on average by eleven per cent, for German wines a good twelve per cent.

The increase in the European harvest of 43 million hectolitres in 1973 will help to cancel out last year's shortages, and lead to greater differentiation with regard to prices. Last year the price of French wines increased considerably but for 1973 it should be back to normal. All in all there will probably be greater pressure on prices of French wines than Italian and German.

The analysis reaches the following conclusions with regard to the German market. For the first time a Mosel wine must come from a specific area and cannot be blended with other wines, so Mosel wines will probably be in shorter supply.

The Mosel district is producing more wines with a *Prädikat* this year than Rhine-Hesse and the Platinate. For this reason the price of high quality wines from the Mosel should be more stable.

Quality wines with a *Prädikat* are made mainly from the later grape crops, for instance Riesling. Of the German wine-growing areas that produce in large quantities only the Mosel has significant Riesling crops and so there will not be a broad range of wines with a *Prädikat*.

Cheaper prices compared with 1972 may be noted for Palatinate wines, especially as the Palatinate is mainly affected by the ending of the Mosel blend.

The wine market in Rhine-Hesse should not see great rises and falls. Harvesting was carried out without any major difficulties, but reports that Rhine-Hesse wines would be cheap that were circulating a few weeks ago have proved to be unfounded. Prices have risen from week to week.

The survey shows an increase in the grape harvest in the Federal Republic of thirty per cent or ten million hectolitres, in France of about thirty per cent ot 75 million hectolitres and by 18 per cent in Italy to seventy million hectolitres.

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, 4 December 1973)

Electrified families

Private households in this country have reached a high degree of saturation where electrical equipment is concerned, according to a report issued in Frankfurt by the Vereinigung deutscher Elektrizitätswerke (VdEW). Nine out of ten families have a refrigerator, about eight out of ten a washing machine, more than six out of ten cook by electricity and about a half have an electric water-heater.

In recent years the proportion of houses with a deep-freeze and washing machine has increased. About three out of ten now have a freezer while seven per cent wash up automatically.

VdEW reports that there has been a rapid increase in the number of houses with electric room heaters. Many of these are storage heaters. Ten years ago room heaters throughout the country had a total output of 400 megawatts. By the end of 1972 the total output of electric heaters in this country was 16,400 megawatts. These heaters consumed more than five per cent of the electricity used by the general public in 1972.

(Lübecker Nachrichten, 11 November 1973)

■ SPORT

Old age begins at thirty, sports medic claims

Süddeutsche Zeitung

For years sports medicine has been concerned exclusively with the numerically diminutive category of top-flight athletes, ignoring a large number of other aspects Dr Peter Lenhart told the seventh congress of Bavarian sports medics on 1 December in Munich.

The conference was attended by some 150 university men and practitioners in sports medicine from four countries. A number of interesting conclusions were reached.

Dr Land of Erlangen University, for instance, dealt with the dangers attendant on sporting activity in old age. He stressed that sports such as tennis, when first embarked on once the first bloom of youth is past, can prove a health hazard unless preceded by sensible training.

"The older people are, the longer the distances they should run," says Dr Lang, who is a specialist in sport for the elderly. When is one old in a sporting context? As far as Dr Lang is concerned old age begins at thirty!

At the other end of the scale the oldest long-distance runner in Bavaria who puts in regular training and is accordingly under regular medical supervision is a sprightly 87-year-old so there is hope for us all yet!

In this context Dr Eugen Gossner of Augsburg, president of the Bavarian association, voiced serious criticism of the qualifications required for the sporting proficiency badges awarded by the Federal Republic Sports League.

Requirements for the lapel badge in gold for the over-forties place too much emphasis on acceleration and speed. A number of changes ought to be made with older people in mind, Dr Gossner reckoned.

Specialists in sports medicine are indeed contemplating launching a rival proficiency award scheme along the lines of those run by the less demanding but none the less useful keep-fit campaign.

Dr Rudolf Zimmer delivered a paper on sport for the handicapped. "New series of exercises need to be evolved," he reported, adding that "more and more people handicapped either congenitally or as a result of accidents are taking up sport. Bavaria, with a population of roughly ten million, boasts getting on for 15,000 handicapped sports enthusiasts, a fair number of whom are young people.

Two out of three swimmers rescued while in difficulties in Bavarian rivers, lakes and baths survived, it was further reported, which is in part a feather in the cap for the sports doctors among the lifeguards.

Dr Dieter Baron was more interested in the practical consequences of medical advice for sport. "Top-flight athletes are in thraldom to their sport and to their diets," the medical superindendent of Damp sports clinic noted.

Diet proved to be a controversial topic, views diverging widely, but oddly enough virtually everyone seemed to agree that the best pick-me-up at half-time or between heats is a bar of chocolate.

Psychology was also on the agenda. "What we lack is psychological assistance for failed athletes," claimed Rainer W. Kemmler, psychological adviser to the national skiing team.

In his view most top-flight athletes suffer from overpowering fears of failure. He advocated special relaxation techniques for athletes, provocatively claiming that from the psychological viewpoint Walter Demel's encouraging performance in the cross-country skiing disciplines at Sapporo last year was far more valuable than Monika Pflug's Olympic gold medal in speed-skating.

The ability to think clearly while skiing or ski-jumping was dealt with by Kemmler with reference to an instructive case history, that of a top-flight Federal Republic ski-jumper who literally no longer knew what he was doing the moment he took off from the ski-jump. The upshot was that he was unable to correct mistakes he made in mid-air and improve his performance.

Dr Michael Sprang of Erlangen noted last but not least that athletes who walked around with electronic circuits in the soles of their shoes or the braces that held up their trousers were most unlikely to develop their muscles as a result. That, Dr Gossner concluded, takes a load off all our minds. This new variety of electronic doping is currently all the rage and now that medics can be fairly sure it is little more than a confidence trick they have reason to breathe a sigh of relief.

Jan Eberhard Vaubel

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, 3 December 1973)

Uta Schorn, the 16-year-old gymnastchampion from Leverkusen (Photo: Nordbild)

Gymnasts show flagrant disregard for health risks

Competitive gymnastics is a dangerous discipline; of that there can be no doubt. The news cannot even come as a surprise to anyone. Some time has elapsed since ex-national coach Hans Timmermann exposed by means of a questionnaire the fact that every other female gymnast (55.5 per cent, to be precise) has sustained major injuries in the course of her sporting career.

Similar, though perhaps not so startling figures would doubtless come to light were a similar questionnaire to be circulated among top-flight male gymnasts,' though as European champion Eberhard Gienger points out the demands made on men and women by gymnastics disciplines differ fundamentally.

Flexibility of the vertebral column is, to somewhat oversimplify matters, what is mainly required of women, whereas men have to develop as many muscles all over the body with the aim of keeping the body ramrod-straight.

Certainly, the problem is more acute as far as female gymnasts are concerned, and Tosca-Goswina Dorau, the new women's chief coach, feels that the health hazard can be surmounted with the aid of judicious and appropriate training techniques and schedules.

The large number of injuries is due mainly to over-readiness to take risks, the chief coach claims. In theory less daredevil training schedules are feasible enough, she says, though she is realistic enough to admit that in practice not every precaution is (or perhaps can be!) taken. It is not just a matter of training but also one of equipment, however. The International Gymnastics Federation, Gienger comments, ought really to permit the use of softer mats that absorb much of the impact energy with which the backbone must otherwise cope.

Suitable systematic training and improved equipment do not get at the root of the trouble, however. International standards are inexorably improving for both men and women. What used to be an outstanding performance will soon be run-of-the-mill.

One cannot but wonder whether all this ambition is not misguided. Gymnastics is increasingly assuming the proportions of a circus act with detrimental consequences for the health of gymnasts that are ruthlessly disregarded.

Two alarming and symptomatic trends are that while the requirements of top-flight gymnasts are growing steadily more demanding the age at which this prowess is required is continually plummeting.

Nowadays fourteen-year-old girls are the white hopes, according to Eberhard Gienger. Chief coach Dorau may feel that girls of this age ought not to be subjected to international routines, but in practice they very often are.

One can but hope that both coaches and gymnasts will be sensible enough to call it a day should the teenagers' growth seem affected in any way, but alas this is little more than wishful thinking.

Take, for instance, the sad case of Ulrike Weyh, a one-time competitive gymnast and talented youngster who has been forced to retire with her pelvis and hips out of joint. Ulrike is still only sixteen! *Peter John*

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 4 December 1973)

Swimming stars pushed too far when they are too young

Swimming prodigies who set up records at thirteen and fourteen come to grief because they are coached to peak too young rather than because the fame goes to their heads.

Starting systematic training at an early age does no harm at all, but girls ought not to be taxed to their utmost before the age of eighteen or boys before the age of twenty.

Performance must be stepped up in accordance with overall development. Youngsters who are pushed to the limits of their endurance at too early an age soon feel they will never be able to improve on their performances. In this frame of mind defeats are bound to lead to resignation.

This, then, is why youngsters retire early, cutting out from the hue and cry of top-flight sport. This is the reason for a phenomenon that is growing increasingly common not only among young swimmers but also among gymnasts.

Against a background of success, hysterics and the vain desire to produce infant prodigies who break records at the drop of a hat all this may sound somewhat heretical, but it does serve to remind us of essentials.

"Comparative Studies in Performance Development of Top-Flight Athletes," edited by the Federal Sports Institute of Cologne and published by Hofmann of Schorndorf, is the work from which these arguments are taken.

Dr Karl Feige, one-time head of the Kiel University department of physical education, and a team of associates have devoted intensive study to the performance trends of various groups of top-flight swimmers.

Performance graphs were drawn with computer assistance on the basis of the Federal Republic Amateur Swimming Association's lists of the ten best performers in given disciplines over the years 1948 to 1958.

Special attention was paid to the individual swimmers' peak seasons.

The upshot, borne out by other surveys, is, in a nutshell, that swimmers who are coached to peak at an early age do so but maintain their peak for a shorter period of time and soon pass it.

Junior champions can be coached to reach the top in four years but girls who are coached so as to develop gradually generally do better and do so over a longer period than the fly-by-nights.

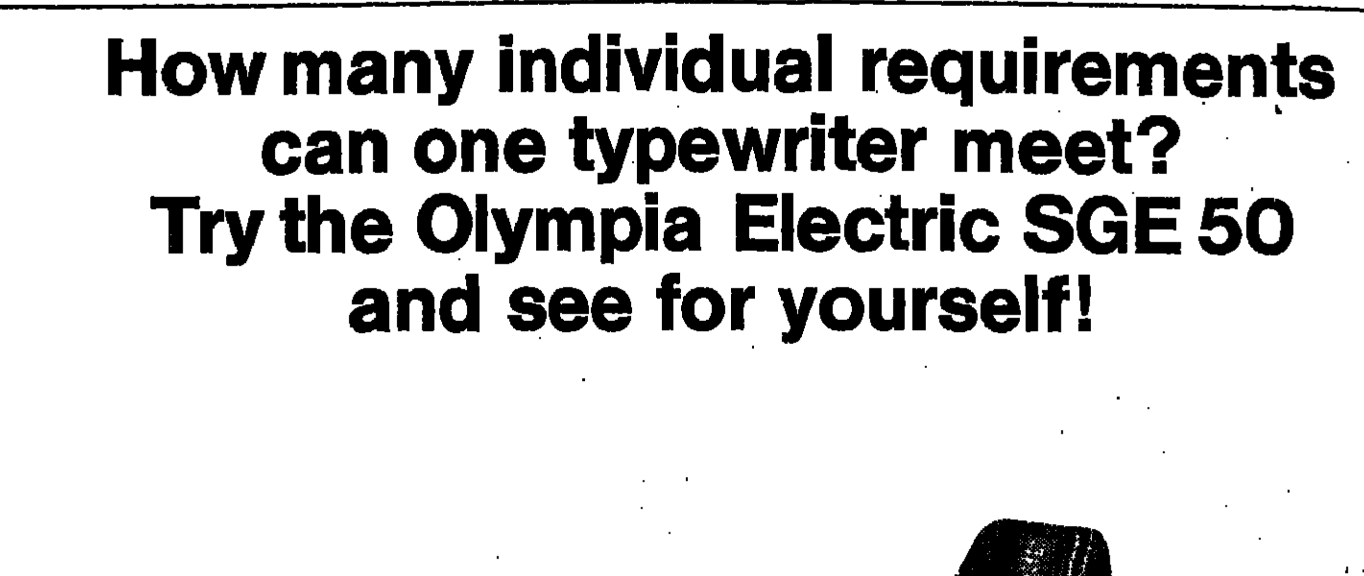
The prodigies obviously tail off badly without improving their performances after a meteoric start. Their potential is best used when exploited to the full at the appropriate stage of their sporting career.

Tailoring coaching schedules to the general development of young people makes obvious medical common sense. What is more, medical evidence conclusively proves, in the words of Professor Josef Nöcker, that "people who reach their personal peak before the age of eighteen have failed to achieve their absolute potential."

Coaching juvenile record-breakers may be a feat of physical ability and technical accomplishment but it can hardly be said to keep pace with the maturity of the youngsters' personalities.

This conclusion of Dr Feige's is confirmed, not surprisingly, by Soviet research. Soviet studies emphasise the inseparable links between personality development and individual peak performance (and not only in terms of sporting prowess).

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 30 November 1973)


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